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ABSTRACT

The major challenge confronting higher education today, how to maintain and enhance quality in a time of increasingly scarce resources, is examined. Discussed are the characteristics of the successful change process, the need for open communication, motivation of volunteers, key start up activities, and the importance of follow-through. Chapters include: mobilizing for campus retention: the context; a campus health check: 11 vital signs; key principles for mobilizing campus action: creating energy and direction through futuring; a systematic process model for campus retention; implementation issues and obstacles; and vital signs and indicators of retention. It is suggested that to assure optimum effectiveness, organizational development should follow two principles: (1) the planned change should encompass activities that cut across various segments of the institution, and (2) organizational development activities must marshal the collective resources and energy of the faculty, administration and staff of the institution. A bibliography and index are provided. (LC)

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Mobilizing the Campus for Retention:

AN INNOVATIVE QUALITY OF LIFE MODEL

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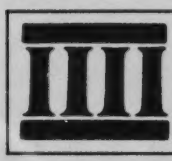

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Contents

PREFACE ix

1. MOBILIZING FOR CAMPUS RETENTION: THE CONTEXT 3

2. A CAMPUS HEALTH CHECK: ELEVEN VITAL SIGNS 21

3. KEY PRINCIPLES FOR MOBILIZING CAMPUS ACTION 33

4. CREATING ENERGY AND DIRECTION THROUGH FUTURING 41

5. A SYSTEMIC PROCESS MODEL FOR CAMPUS RETENTION 53

6. IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES AND OBSTACLES 67

7. VITAL SIGNS AND INDICATORS OF RETENTION 85

INDEX 99

BIBLIOGRAPHY 105

Preface

The major challenge confronting higher education today is how to maintain and enhance quality in a time of increasingly scarce resources. During the coming decades, change and innovation will become the distinguishing characteristics of campuses that successfully meet this challenge. Thus, the current environment of American higher education is conducive to campus-wide efforts to review—and where necessary, to renovate—the delivery of academic knowledge and skills and the process of student development.

Sentiment in favor of improving the quality of all aspects of campus life has increased both inside and outside academe. Public demands for "quality assurance" in education are complemented by concerns for "protecting quality" voiced on the campus, but regardless of local refinements of definition, the demand for quality from all quarters is likely to be heard and sustained.

Achieving and sustaining a high quality campus community is the key to effective student retention. It is dependent, however, upon a strategic planning process for bringing about the preferred types of change for institutional renewal. The underpinnings of this process rest on the successful application of theories and practices of organizational development and planned change.

The key to the change effort is the **PROCESS**. The process must be carefully and expertly tailored to the specific community's requirements. Simple, fixed designs will not be effective. Models for renewal and change must be flexible and capable of modification, and must provide for ongoing monitoring and evaluation. The degree to which a campus achieves a strong, vital sense of community and a high quality of campus life will be the degree it can develop and sustain a strong retention effort. After undergoing a process of self-assessment and renewal, a campus can use its resultant "holding" power to positively attract not only students, but faculty, staff and alumni as well as off-campus support.

This book describes and examines the hallmarks and characteristics of a successful, dynamic, high quality campus, and discusses a variety of strategies, assumptions and conditions that can serve as underpinnings for organizing and guiding the campus renewal process. The authors explore the characteristics of the successful change process; the need for open communication; motivation of volunteers; key start up activities; and the importance of follow-through. Also described are the strategic approaches necessary for campus diagnostic and goal-setting activities. The book has been designed to show that full utilization of these strategic approaches is critical and essential for launching, sustaining and renewing the planned change process which, in turn, will improve the quality of life on campus and will lead to increased retention.

Whether the American institution of higher education is a comprehensive university, a community college, or a small liberal arts college, it tends to be organized and administered, almost without exception, in a hierarchical manner. As a result, our institutions of higher education consist of collections of subparts and/or sectors. They accomplish their work through

a great variety of groups, committees, councils and task forces. For the campus to exist as a community, these subparts must recognize that although they serve as an important focus for their members, they are also interdependent in important ways. In that regard, each subpart or sector must learn how to collaborate with the others to achieve institutional goals, and must ultimately learn to collaborate for its own and the institution's survival.

The fact remains that successful collaboration has not been an easy goal to achieve. It will become even more difficult to attain in the next several years, which will be marked even more sharply by limited resources and by increased internal and external competition for those resources.

Achieving permanent and lasting improvement in the college or university requires developing, training and fully using organizational teams as the critical building blocks for the planned change process. Ultimately, the degree to which individuals learn to work together on teams, and teams learn how to work together within the institution, will be the degree to which the campus achieves the quality of community necessary for success in the planned change process and retention effort.

Some campus communities are so embedded in the rich traditions of their past that they have great difficulty orienting towards the changing needs of society. Effective campus leadership provides the opportunities for values clarification work to provide a healthy mixture of "holding on" and "letting go" of traditions and past achievements. Successful planning involves a collaborative blend of "what we want to hold on to," "what we want to leave behind us," and "what we want to become."

In order to assist postsecondary institutions in improving the quality of student life and learning on the campus and in meeting the challenges of the coming decades, this book focuses on the planned change approach to organizational development. Collaborative change that occurs as a result of the joint efforts of groups working toward similar goals is able to enhance the total mission of the institution. Change of this type is also able to influence the activites and represent the interests of the greatest proportion of the institution's students.

To achieve optimum effectiveness, organizational development should follow two basic principles. First, the planned change should encompass activities that cut across various segments of the institution. By simultaneously introducing organizational development activities within all parts of the organization, the effectiveness of the whole may be enhanced.

Second, organizational development activities must marshal the collective resources and energy of the faculty, administration and staff of the institution. These activities cannot remain the purview of a few dedicated individuals, but rather must represent the common interests of a majority of the organization's members if the change effort is to be successful.

When it is properly structured, the group planning and initiating the change becomes more than a collection of individuals representing various interests. New forces and new properties are created through the interaction that occurs when persons work toward a common goal. It is this collective spirit arising out of collaborative efforts that can really make the difference in instituting a plan of organizational development that enhances the quality of student life and learning on campuses.

Two themes—the systemic and planned change approach to organizational improvement, and the need for collaborative effort—are

woven throughout this book. The organization of this book is fourfold: First, the separate, distinct calls for organizational change are identified from a variety of perspectives both internal and external to higher education. Second, the change process, its elements, barriers and key strategies, is reviewed. Third, a model for a successful change effort aimed at improving the quality of student life and learning is presented; and fourth, indicators of vital signs of retention are discussed in detail.

Both research and institutional consultations suggest that a "readiness" or "spirit of cooperation" is developing on more and more campuses across the country. A willingness to work together at all institutional levels and across boundaries of responsibility is increasingly evident. It is most heartening to see on some campuses a clear recognition that a college is not made up of wholly autonomous subparts. Some institutions have already developed an initial awareness of the need for systemic approaches that call for collaborative problem solving, openness and wide participation.

The vibrant, healthy campus of the future will have, as a permanent feature, constant renewal and change. In fact, renewal will need to be "institutionalized," and institutions will need to keep abreast of external innovation and change. On the campus committed to achieving an improved quality of life through institutional renewal, increased retention will be an achievable goal—but it will require continuous effort. Maintaining competent changeability includes a process of ongoing internal scanning and continuous external scanning of successful practices and innovations of neighboring systems, namely other campuses.

Strong stewardship of our colleges and universities is vital in meeting the challenges of the decades ahead. The definition of stewardship assumes "we" instead of "me" and importantly confirms that campus community ownership must be by all rather than by some, if its good health and promising future are to develop. Commitment to this view, alone, provides a major step forward.

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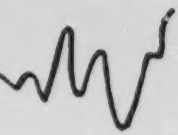

" Instead of focusing on problems, there is a strong tendency to shift to a vision of the possible and to develop a plan for getting there . . .One of the most promising trends is the strong motivation and readiness for a community change effort."

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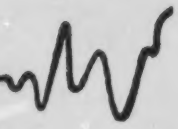

MOBILIZING FOR CAMPUS RETENTION: THE CONTEXT

Over the course of American history, campus communities have consistently been the object of pride, scrutiny, high expectations, and analysis. Throughout, major importance and high social value have been ascribed to postsecondary education. This enterprise has grown from 250 colleges of professional and elitist character at the time of the Civil War to what now is virtually an open system of mass education at more than 3,000 colleges and universities across the nation.

This unprecedented growth of recent decades, however, has tended to mask the survival stakes that heretofore were a fact of life for colleges. As the survival stakes become more crucial in the decade ahead, a new complementary concern is evolving: **the need to improve the quality of campus life.**

Just as important as the emergence of this need is the **emergence of an incremental readiness to do something about improving the quality of campus life.** There are voices speaking, both inside and outside the campus community, and while the sounds are not singular, melodious, or absolute, there are discernible harmonies mingled within the harmonically unresolved.

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*The term **estate** describes classifications of individuals grouped as follows: **Executive Administration**—Board of Control, Chief Executive Officer and Cabinet level administrators; **Senior Administration**—Senior level administrators such as associate vice presidents, deans, executive directors and department heads; **Staff**—professional, technical, clerical and service personnel; **Faculty**—all teaching staff and librarians; **Students**—all individuals enrolled for study; **Alumni Community**—all University graduates, former students and friends.

The term **major organizational area(s)** describes one or all of the following: individual colleges or academic divisions, professional schools and administrative divisions such as Business and Finance, Student Affairs, University Relations, and so forth.

The voices from the estates and the major organizational areas of the campus community express the pains, strains and hopes of executives, faculty, staff, students and alumni. The strong differences between them derive from their different viewing locations within the community.

Likewise, voices are heard from outside the campus. Taxpayers, parents, government, associations and experts on the subject of higher education are all speaking at once. Their combined voices also chorus a desire to see the campus community meet its potential, together with some expressions of doubt as to whether that potential will be fulfilled.

Since sensitivity to these voices obviously guides the roles to be taken in a collaborative change effort, we must ask, **Who are the voices? What are they saying? What does it all mean?**

ON-CAMPUS VOICES: PAINS, STRAINS AND FRUSTRATIONS

If we listen to the major groups in the campus community, we can frequently hear dismay and wishes for change which come from common pains or frustrations.

FACULTY

"If they're serious about this teaching system they better get serious about changing the reward system too."

"If I was president, I'd raise admission standards in two minutes, and I think that would do more for morale, improving teaching, and increasing productivity than all the other ideas combined."

CLERICAL STAFF

"Without the union we'd be lost around here."

"I look forward to going home all day, but by the time I get home I'm so worn out there isn't much I can do, even when things are slow in the summer."

JUNIOR PROFESSIONAL STAFF

"It's mostly a big bureaucracy as far as I can see, and it just wears you out to get anything done."

"It isn't how good you are, it's how long you've been here that counts."

ACADEMIC DEANS AND DEPARTMENT HEADS

"We're often caught in the middle of an impossible situation. I'll never get used to being viewed as the enemy by my faculty colleagues, but that happens all the time."

"I'm really looking forward to retirement, even though that's quite a ways off."

GOVERNING BOARDS

"It would be nice to turn the clock back to where the campus was not so complex, people were all headed in the same direction, and things were more like a big family."

"I wish we had the power people think we do. It's really frustrating when you want to get something accomplished."

STUDENTS

"They act like they've never heard of consumer rights. We're the consumers, so they have to respond to what we want and how we want it."

"I think professors cop out when they say students don't want hard teaching and good advising. The truth is that they just aren't providing it."

ADMINISTRATIVE DEPARTMENT HEADS, DIRECTORS

"If you're really smart you'll spend time building your turf and protecting it, or somebody will end up taking some of it away."

"Productivity counts more than the intangibles, and that bothers me."

EXECUTIVE ADMINISTRATION

"Anybody at this level who's honest with himself has to admit that to stay on top of things you have to be a master of political juggling, crisis reaction, and instinctive gut-feel. Maybe that's not good management and maybe it doesn't produce perfect results, but that's where we're at."

"Nobody wants quality more than I, but if we don't get more productivity, we're going to shrink right off the map."

In all these statements, several closely entwined major themes are discernible.

Impersonalization and Isolation—Compartmentalization, specialization and hierarchy are structural realities. Interaction is infrequent and restricted. Linkages and connections are often poor, and the result is that the environment lacks supportive, interpersonal relationships and relational networking.

Withdrawal, Anxiety, Fear, Mistrust—Patterns of lateness and absence, conscious limiting of time spent on campus, and an eagerness to get home are becoming commonplace. Too, it is not uncommon to see many signs of anxiety, fear and mistrust within the campus community. This is because community members do not always identify with the missions of the college. It can also be caused by a lack of interpersonal involvement, being isolated, trying to deal with ambiguity and uncertainty, and having to cope with fast-paced change.

Adversarial, Polarized Relations—Distrust, depersonalization, and vested interest have spawned win-lose behaviors within the community. Communication distortion and posturing behaviors often displace collaborative attempts to reach solutions.

Security and Dependence Reaction—We all need stability, support and security. The campus community has become less able to give positive reinforcement. As the voices tell us, failure to meet these needs has produced a growing tendency within the community to value fringe benefits, seniority rights, retirement plans, and protective associations. There is some evidence of reduced risk-taking as a result.

Powerlessness and Passivity—Many levels feel a reduced capacity to influence campus life. This, by itself, can lead to inaction. Lack of communication linkages, fragmentation, weak central coordination of interdependent activities, and decentralized policy-making reinforce this feeling within the campus community.

The conditions listed and described above represent distinct criticisms of the quality of campus life as viewed by community members. Essential individual and human system needs and desires are not being met adequately in many campus communities today. Thus many symptoms of basic problems are clearly becoming evident.

ON-CAMPUS VOICES: READINESS, HOPE AND OPPORTUNITY

Paradoxically, at least two powerful forces showing a strong desire to get well have emerged as a consequence of these campus symptoms. First, community members want help or at least a response; they are further motivated by a general vision of what their future could be when campus problems are relieved. They are quite able to describe the kind of campus community that will meet their needs and will improve achievement of the college's goals. Second, the chief executive will strongly want to see these symptoms reduced or eliminated, since the symptoms' continued existence seriously impairs the ability of the campus to function productively. Not only is impaired functioning an obstacle to the executive's ability to lead, but it comes at the very time that increased productivity is perceived as one of the primary bottom-line requirements.

Let's listen to other voices from the campus community as they offer some very hopeful messages, which show signs of readiness, hope and opportunity.

STUDENTS

"When I was a freshman it seemed like nobody cared, but now they're falling all over themselves to make it look like they care and starting to do things they should have done in the first place."

"If I didn't think this was the best school, I wouldn't be here."

FACULTY

"This place is really underrated. If you knew where to look, you'd be amazed at some of the super things happening in the classrooms on campus."

"Other than football, I have no gripes. Most of the changes are long overdue...faculty need to be involved though...who around here can know more about the college than faculty?"

CLERICAL STAFF

"If we didn't turn some of this around, the college would go down the tubes—and that just isn't going to happen."

"We don't disagree with the decisions as much as with the way they are made; we need to be involved more."

ACADEMIC DEANS AND DIRECTORS

"The faculty have never been so productive."

"We need to build on the strong foundation that's already here."

GOVERNING BOARD

"This is a great school, and it's a shame more people don't know it."

"I hope I'm not sending out the wrong signals when I say this, but I really think people are going in their own direction too much around here. If I had my way we'd do a better job of deciding exactly what the college stands for and then tie everything we do to accomplishing these things and evaluating how we're doing."

ALUMNI

"I'm more proud of my degree now than when I was there."

"It's about time they're solving the problems we had when I was a student."

EXECUTIVE ADMINISTRATION

"There's a real sensitivity to getting things turned around and that's tremendous; but I hope we don't get too carried away and go overboard on this."

"I agree with faculty and others, that we have to keep our sights on our mission, our standards, and the big issues; and I think we're doing a pretty good job of that already."

Throughout these statements, we can discern a variety of recurring themes:

Pride in Self and College—There is almost a universal expression of pride in the college, though it sometimes is offered with explanations of why the positive identity of the college may be limited. Furthermore, there is a conscientious concern about doing a good job and a recognition that the job being done is important. This positive self-concept is further reinforced by a widespread contemporary interest in self development.

Recognition of Interdependence—The necessity of working together is voiced at all levels within the community. There is a clear recognition that the institution is not made up of autonomous unrelated pieces. Whenever major tasks have been undertaken recently, participants have perceived that achievement of goals is vitally dependent upon other parts of the system.

Such experiences have given rise to frustrations about the complexity of the process. However, they have also introduced

sharing mechanisms and valuable positive experiences with collaborative problem solving. Also, there is an increasing awareness of the need for systemic approaches that call for openness and wide participation.

Desire to Survive—For some, there is the recognition that survival is at stake. The college, the department, or their job might not exist if conditions do not improve. However, this desire to survive is likely to serve as a strong stimulus for productive participation in any mobilization effort.

Desire for Humane, Supportive Environment—A high-quality campus community supports self-development. This is an ideal toward which most community members enthusiastically wish to move. Further, they would like certain personal aspirations and plans to be supported by their experiences in the campus community. Movement in the direction of these desires already is under way and promises to be another powerful motivator for successful change efforts.

Willingness to Accept Responsibility—Calls for accountability come from everyone. There is little evidence of significant efforts to escape responsibility within campus communities. Quite the contrary, acceptance of responsibility is seen as one of the best ways to help guarantee control of campus achievements. Too, as better definitions of specific accountability have occurred, there have been direct improvements in exercising responsibility.

Desire for Meaningful Participation—On the subject of participation, there is a loud chorus of consensus. Accepting accountability includes meaningful participation in decisions that directly or indirectly affect that accountability. Full, equal participation is desired. Invitations to this kind of participation can be expected to be met with active and sustained involvement.

Throughout these statements from within the campus community, there is evidence of considerable readiness to mobilize to improve the quality of campus life. Community members hope for such action and are willing to be a part of the mobilization effort. Many campuses are just waiting to develop the right kind of activities geared to the college's unique needs, to lead them to improve community life in a collaborative manner.

VOICES FROM OUTSIDE THE CAMPUS COMMUNITY

As we have heard, voices from within the community hope for change and are ready to participate in a campus-wide retention effort.

Let's listen to some voices from outside the campus:

ACCREDITING ASSOCIATIONS

"Maybe the largest and most destructive feature we see is campus competition and politics...They eat up valuable, scarce resources and push the college's mission into the background."

"Problems concerning campus governance, involvement, and communication are at the acute stage on too many campuses."

HIGHER EDUCATION LITERATURE

"Quality must be protected and enhanced, and better ways must be devised to deal with pluralistic interests that are in conflict."

"Many colleges must learn to cope with enrollment depression, and this means drastically different ways of thinking and acting."

COLLEGE STUDENT RETENTION EXPERTS

"The best retention program is not a specific set of retention activities; it is a pervasive attitude of not taking people for granted and involves improving the quality of life within the campus community."

"Campus interaction and communication is critical; and faculty-student interaction always is a key factor in retaining students."

"Colleges can hold more students by examining and acting upon deficiencies associated with student orientation, quality academic programs, college costs, counseling and advising, career development, campus activities, housing, withdrawal procedures and the environmental fit of the school and the college."

GOVERNMENT

"Higher education will always be high on the priority list, but there's less for everyone."

"There just has to be more productivity, and in some cases the frills will have to be cut out."

TAXPAYERS

"I've taken more sensible courses and training here in the company...being realistic, we just don't need so many colleges and universities anymore, especially with the way we're falling behind in the world the way we're going now."

"I'm for education as much as anybody, but I think colleges can get by with less just like everybody else has to."

CRITICAL MESSAGES FROM OFF-CAMPUS VOICES

Desire to Maintain Quality—Voices external to the campus also are concerned about protecting and guaranteeing quality. Quality control seems to be a general societal expectation at this time.

Need to Get Results With Finite Resources—Results are expected. Also, there is a clear message that more resources and more money should not be viewed as a cure-all. While there is a recognition of financial strains, there is a general conclusion that these strains should prompt improvements rather than impede them.

Need to Clarify Identity to Become Self-directing—There seems to be a general feeling that colleges can and should be self-directing, without undue external mandates or controls. Implicit in many of the comments is the opinion that a college must know what it is before it can fully be self-directing. Also implicit is the belief that some colleges need to better clarify and integrate their identity, mission and goals.

Need to Improve Internal Planning and Implementing—Concern is frequently voiced about the quality of planning and action within the campus community, though it is acknowledged that improvement is observable. A special emphasis is placed on the need to do collaborative planning and implementing because of the campus community's complex interdependent parts.

SUMMARY: CURRENT CONDITIONS AND THE NEED FOR CHANGE

There are voices of indictment, apathy, frustration, hope and opportunity.

Within the messages from inside and outside the campus the following summary of current conditions is intended to provide a further perspective on the task of enhancing the quality of campus life.

1. Colleges and universities are not keeping up.

If action is not taken soon, one of the most threatening themes is the growing public sense that colleges and universities are becoming obsolete and are not worth the vast sums of money spent on them.

This perception is strengthened by today's reality that much of the nation's postsecondary educational activity no longer resides within colleges and universities. The liberal arts and general education have been under heavy assault. There is acute concern about deficiencies in graduates' skills concerning reading, writing, communication and critical thinking.

Married to the view that colleges are becoming obsolete is the growing concern that the United States is falling behind, and that colleges should be playing a larger positive role in turning around this condition. Whether college fulfills this expected role is dependent upon its ability to change.

2. Lagging leadership readiness is changing.

No matter how hard leadership works and how right it is, the campus problems seem to pile higher. Faculty, students and staff all say they know the main problems and many of the solutions. But situations that everyone else sees as major campus failures are described by leadership as the consequence of shifting priorities, poor teamwork, bad luck, fallen-down accountability, or limited funds. The widespread response of leadership is that there really are no sizeable problems and leadership is "on top of everything important."

Leadership is discrepant in its perception of its campus problems, as compared to its own on-campus voices. This condition has resulted in a lagging leadership readiness to act on some of the large and growing system-wide campus problems.

Unfortunately leadership has been "screened" from accurately hearing and clearly seeing the system-wide magnitude and scope of

these problems. Crisis management is a primary contributor to this condition. Another primary culprit is the vertical communication structure. Because hierarchy distorts communication, the information-gathering apparatus always tends to be confirming. Feedback received by decision makers reinforces already existing images. The result is campus leadership activity which is restrained from full success, because of impairment to fully hearing and seeing the real shape and form of campus problems.

This condition is temporary and passing. Never before in the history of higher education have so many campus leaders exhibited so many positive abilities and energies. Furthermore, campus leaders do not wish to administer by crisis management or by other modes of coping with never-ending surface symptoms.

3. Future orientation is becoming widespread.

There is a genuine and widespread interest in the future of higher education. This is an essential component of a successful mobilization effort, and indicates the readiness of an institution to undertake change. Ultimately, renewal needs to be institutionally internalized. The organization must have constant renewal as a permanent feature. Concern for this future-responsive capability is only possible when there is a strong future orientation.

4. Power sharing is increasing.

There is an endemic sense of powerlessness at all levels of the campus community. Structurally, power is generally centralized. This may help explain why there are constant struggles to seize power.

Recently, however, there seems to be a growing acceptance of the concept of sharing power by giving everybody a sense of power. Emphasis on collaboration, participative decision-making, teamwork and quality circles are examples of this trend.

5. Proactive inclination is increasing.

Except at the executive level, there is considerable evidence of a growing reluctance to continue to rely on reactive approaches for dealing with campus conditions.

Proactive inclinations are increasing because of the current

ineffectiveness of reactive approaches and techniques. Instead of focusing on problems, there is a strong tendency to shift to a vision of the possible to develop a plan for getting there. Innovative models are thought to simplify and economize; they replace the notion that little can be accomplished without more resources. Finally, emphasis is placed on preserving quality by changing priorities rather than by maintaining everything and decreasing quality.

6. Reliance on consultant resources is increasing.

Consultant facilitators are not new to change efforts or to organizational development activities in business, industry, government, or volunteer organizations.

Use of consultant facilitators within the campus community is not yet widespread, however. But there is an increasing sensitivity to and increasing use of this resource on college campuses. Many campuses have already discovered that they have this rich resource within their walls. Undoubtedly, these resources will be tapped and will become prominent in future mobilization efforts.

7. Readiness exists for mobilization within estates.

One of the most promising trends is the strong motivation and readiness for a community change effort. It is hardly an overstatement to say that this is virtually universal, though observers describe varying levels of readiness. Without this readiness, a successful change effort cannot be mounted.

A more qualified readiness is apparent within the executive estate. At this level there is a strong motivation to eliminate negative symptoms found in the community. However, the executive perception of the cause of these symptoms often is different from the perception of the other estates.

8. Resources are decreasing.

Voices from inside and outside the campus show a consistent pattern of concern about funding and use of campus resources. Basically, **there is a loose consensus: Campus resources will not continue to expand at the rate of growth experienced through the decade of the seventies. This means that in many cases colleges must significantly change internal priorities or downsize their activities.**

Reactive approaches still are being applied in an effort to live with less, but unfortunately, traditional campus structures and approaches cannot by themselves successfully cope with this difficult task. There is considerable evidence that much of the pain and strain within the community actually has been stimulated by system failures in dealing with this challenge.

9. Dissensus is increasing.

In listening to the voices, it would be possible to conclude that consensus already is in long supply. The word is heard time and again, and is held with high regard. However, campus consensus currently is a myth. In its place is its opposite, what we shall call pluralistic "dissensus." This dissensus is growing and is unnecessarily causing negative influences on campuses across the nation.

Estates within the community operate as autonomous interest groups. Each has good consensus within itself but often has basic differences with some of the others. Because the estates do not exhaust time or energy trying to build campus-wide consensus, decision-makers often are faced with multiple interests, some of which are in conflict, and all of which are emphatically pursued.

Left to itself, pluralistic dissensus magnifies and distorts real differences. Next, it leads to actions that are focused on defusing conflict rather than resolving it.

From the perspective of optimizing productivity, this is precisely the wrong conception and response. **Dissensus is good, not bad. It supplies the drive and creative energy necessary for creative problem solving.** Further, when engaged, **dissensus inevitably produces valuable knowledge, information, data, and knowledge of alternatives for finding solutions.**

10. More campus innovations are required.

The campus community has not, heretofore, relied heavily on its own internal innovative capacities. This helps explain why there are few structures and processes designed to enhance innovative discoveries or inventions on campus.

In fact, expectations and practices prevalent in the campus community actually conceal its rich possibilities. For example: repeated requests for help are considered to be a sign of weakness

rather than strength. The need for competitive advantage negates sharing and adapting processes.

In short, **campus innovations must increase in quality and quantity.** If this is to happen, campuses must develop new ways of dealing with necessary change.

11. An "action mentality" is required.

As many campuses know, the "seller's market" has shifted to a "buyer's market" in recent years. Student consumerism is one major manifestation of this shift. Most colleges and universities did not quickly shift to a "buyer's market" mentality when the "buyer's market" became a reality. Instead, responses were defensive and protective, or denied that the "seller's market" had disappeared.

Instead, the voices from inside the campus evidence a transition from the "seller's market" mentality to an action mentality. There is no doubt that significant campus action is wanted nationwide, and that it will occur. Future action will involve reformulation, adaptation, and rebuilding upon foundations that already exist within postsecondary education during the 80s and 90s.

12. Peer competition can be replaced with collaboration.

Most colleges and universities are not now organized to enhance collaboration. In some settings, true collaboration is almost impossible without introduction of a new model for doing it. Peer competition and feudal politics must be reduced and replaced.

Many campus members find that they enjoy and appreciate the process of collaboration, once they are able to have significant collaborative experiences. The critical need for campus collaboration and its affirmative effect can be expected to produce a development that will spread to many campuses: management teamwork.

Management teamwork, which was born from organization development and management development, emphasizes appropriate leadership style and pertinent teamwork techniques. Regardless of its lifespan, this development is likely to enhance well designed campus-wide mobilization efforts, since they rely so heavily on system-wide teamwork processes.

13. The emphasis on quality is increasing.

The campus is concerned to protect quality. Outside the campus, the concern is expressed as a need to assure quality. Regardless of how quality is defined, the demand for quality from all quarters is likely to be sustained.

The pursuit of quality protection and quality assurance is not easy, but it has many implications for anyone interested in assisting a comprehensive renewal effort. Quality protection activities can expect to focus on campus members' values and attitudes and the process of consensus. For example, the campus must ask itself questions such as "What do we do best?" and "What should we do or not do?" Quality assurance also involves questions about value, but it focuses on quality control and on execution. Campuses must continue to produce a consistently high quality product.

Without the conditions that define a fully healthy campus, it is unlikely that expressed demands for quality can be met. Of course, this again reinforces the need for development of tailored activities which will strengthen and renew our campus communities.

14. Neglect of the human environment is showing.

One of the most notable current trends on campus is a **widespread and sometimes acute feeling of neglect expressed by community members.** This is not a new phenomenon. Traditionally, students have expressed this feeling quite vocally, but now this sense of neglect has spread throughout much of the campus.

Since human resources are the most critical and abundant resources within higher education, this trend has special significance. No one can doubt that something needs to be changed in this regard on most campuses. Further, there is no doubt that the drive for increased productivity is fueled by performance.

The goal of increasing the productivity of human resources certainly is not new to the campus. It requires improvement of the quality of campus life, because the underlying problems are system-wide, and the outcomes will manifest powerful new attractions to the campus and the community.

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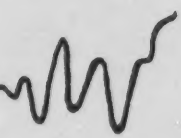

" These eleven vital signs of campus health and wellness are a critical checklist . . . This potential image of campus health and wellness provides a framework for futuring, planning, developing and implementing the mobilization effort."

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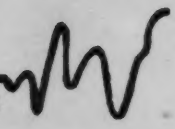

A CAMPUS HEALTH CHECK: ELEVEN VITAL SIGNS

This chapter responds to the question, **"What would the campus community look like if it developed the vitality, productivity and health it could achieve?"**

It is important to answer this question, because it only becomes possible to solve specific problems such as student retention, financial stability, and faculty productivity in the context of a systemic approach. Since most major campus problems are caused by a complex variety of factors of campus operation and culture, the achievement of a high level of student retention results from improvements in many aspects of campus community functioning. Consequently, achievement of the desired outcomes of the mobilization effort (such as the strong attraction and high retention of students) will depend on the success of strategies to build a healthy total campus community. Systemic thinking must replace segment thinking and problem-pain reacting. Total campus loyalty and perspective must replace the turf-oriented competition of the campus political process.

The following paragraphs contain a summary of eleven vital signs of campus health.

Vital Sign I: Collaborative Future-Oriented Planning

The ways in which the campus leadership orients itself in a proactive manner to upgrade campus operations in a world of diminishing resources provide crucial evidence of effective leadership and campus health.

Some campus communities are so embedded in the rich traditions

of their past that they fail to orient themselves to present and future social changes. What is needed are planned opportunities for values clarification to provide a healthy mixture of "holding on" and "letting go" of traditions and past achievements. Successful planning involves a strategic blending of "what we want to hold on to," "what we want to leave behind us" and "what we want to become."

Too many campuses are so involved in the survival issues of the present that the values of the past and challenges of the future are both ignored. Administrators who are preoccupied with studying the extrapolations and projections of the futurists need to change their reactive posture to "what it's going to be like that we will need to fit into and adjust to."

The healthy campus gives strong evidence of using three sources of data—core values developed in the past, assessment of the satisfactions and dissatisfactions of the present situation, and predictions and projections of the future—in order to involve the campus community in the exciting and disciplined activity of defining preferred futures and exploring and developing consensus about these new scenarios. Enlightened campus leadership recognizes that **futuring and planning are not an elitist activity for a few at the top. Rather, those who will be involved in implementing goals and who will be the recipients of the goal-achieving efforts must be involved in a variety of ways in the process of goal-defining and implementation.** Without this process of enrichment and commitment, there cannot be readiness or motivation to achieve the variety of goals of the campus community.

In the 80s and the 90s, the challenge will be to explore in a proactive, innovative way, the formulation and achievement of goals which maintain and enrich the quality of campus life despite the complications of budgetary and other resource limitations.

Vital Sign II: Ongoing Step-wise Evaluation and Progress-Celebration

For campus goals to be vivid and motivating in the everyday lives of the various campus subparts, a series of steps toward those goals must be clearly defined. These steps or subgoals must be delineated in terms of criteria of achievement and evidence of progress toward major and more distant goals.

A system of recognition and rewards for successful achievement or progress is a very crucial part of the leadership responsibility for a healthy campus community. The process of celebrating progress creates one of the most important bases for renewal and continuity of motivation for people to work toward goals and for them to maintain persistent, high-quality efforts.

Of course, not all efforts are successful. Frequently, efforts do not move as rapidly as expected, or dead ends become apparent. This is why a step-wise perspective is significant. Having a step-wise perspective means that there can be rapid discovery that "things are not going well," and more effective, less time-wasting procedures can be developed. This perspective, then, leads to constructive revision of the direction of effort. Because campus operation always involves a great variety of goals and multiple tracks, the responsibility of leadership is to **devise and utilize ongoing systems of "knowing where things are" so that support, review, reinforcement and celebration can be effectively utilized on a routine basis.** In the coming decade, it will be more important than ever before to minimize waste effort, to effectively utilize early warning systems, to identify the misused, "off the beam" efforts and to identify duplication of effort.

Vital Sign III: Participative Management Rights, Responsibilities, Accountabilities

A major, often painful, transition in management style and responsibility is under way as part of what Toffler has defined as a post-industrial "third wave" in organizational structuring and functioning. A key element is the "flattening" of the structure of power and responsibility in all types of human systems.

On campus, as in other organizations, there are vigorous dialogs about the complementary issues of rights and responsibilities, of accountabilities and freedoms. Typically, campus individuals and groups are very unclear about the boundaries of their potential initiatives and accountabilities. This causes uncreative, cautious or foolish risking.

On the healthy campus there will be clear definitions of the responsibilities, rights and accountabilities of each subpart of the campus, considered in relation to the others. There are clear two-way contracts between the leaders and the led, between administrators and faculty and between teachers and students.

In the healthy campus, all accountability contracts are reciprocal, and all statements of responsibility are linked to statements of rights and opportunities. In this setting both the sense and reality of partnership and shared responsibility are clearly evident.

Vital Sign IV: Ongoing Coordination, Support, Evaluation and Feedback

Most of the persons who have delegated or achieved leadership responsibility on campus have not been trained in the participative management skills required for the 80s and 90s. The current

models of management and leadership on campuses are derived from the vertical, authoritarian structures of business or from the quite different paternalistic patterns of socializing and educating youth. Both of these patterns are inappropriate. The nature of horizontal and autonomous campus community systems and the significant changes which are evolving in intergenerational relationships require a new pattern. The great challenge is to **delegate and decentralize responsibilities, and to centralize crucial coordination and linking functions which are necessary to the effective leadership of the decentralized campus community.** The technical skills for this new pattern include teambuilding among turf-oriented peer leaders, the establishment of feedback procedures from students, faculty and administrators, the installing and managing of early warning systems about campus problems, the effective provision of "feedback about feedback," the utilization of informal communication networks, and effective two-way communication between campus groups, policy-making boards and the public.

This means increased complexities for leaders, and increased degrees of stress and demand for skills. The model for campus adaptation should be the profit-making sector. Hereafter, it will be increasingly necessary to take active advantage of management development programs and to make use of outside consultants as technical resources in order to maintain and increase campus productivity. This assistance is critical in guaranteeing successful performance of the difficult roles of the 80s and 90s.

Vital Sign V: The Open System—Scanning, Sharing, Adapting

Our current society is one of change and transition, new regulations and unexplored freedoms, downsizing pressures and upgrading demands. These conditions establish the need for the campus to be maintained as an open system. It must be sensitively open to the flow of change in the external environment, and in the various sectors of its internal environment. Its "antennae" need to continuously inquire and search for underutilized resources.

Many educational leaders in campus communities are now coping with similar problems of adjusting to and initiating change. Many creative innovations aimed at the improvement of campus life and leadership practices are risked and developed every month. In the open campus, there are procedures of scanning for and identifying these innovations, and adapting those that seem to have relevance. New approaches to funding, to involving faculty in academic counseling, to utilizing alumni as resources, and to developing off-campus learning programs are among the many areas of continual innovation. **If every campus leader could accept seriously the fact**

that the successful practices of higher education which will be widely accepted an utilized ten years from now may already be here, there would be a great surge in the survival and improved health of campus communities. This would be particularly true of the great gains most campuses would make in the techniques of attracting and retaining students.

Another sign of campus wellness is manifested by external scanning activities—the way the campus explores and uses the technical and human resources of the surrounding community that are available for part-time teaching and for providing learning opportunities for students.

Another task of achieving an open system orientation is the discovery of unused and underutilized personnel resources within the staff and student body. The development of resource inventories and skill banks in many human systems is increasing rapidly, and is resulting in the development of very significant responses to the almost universal budget cutbacks experienced by educational systems.

Vital Sign VI: Innovative Risk-taking and Interunit Collaboration

There would be an almost instant improvement in campus health and wellness if asking for help and offering help could become signs of strength rather than signs of weakness and loss of competitive advantage in the working relationships of peers. Kenneth Benne has said that we only imported two-thirds of the French Revolution, **liberte** and **egalite**, but neglected to import **fraternite**, and instead installed sibling rivalry as the pattern of relations between peers in organizations. The confrontations of budget, curriculum and enrollment often lead to a competitive struggle to "get my slice." Obviously change is needed here, because win-win opportunities could "enlarge the pie for everybody," and could sustain campus wellness as well as protecting it.

Another important element in productive and efficient systems is the establishment of **ad hoc** collaborative task forces. They are composed of personnel from different subparts of the system who have complementary skills and resources to solve significant problems and produce innovative recommendations. Effectuation of this type of resource requires the efficient use of skill banks and resource inventories. In these banks and inventories, the skills, experiences and backgrounds of each person are recorded for quick retrieval. Peer managers will use the banks to see each other as resources offering mutual support and help, and administrators will recognize and reward peer utilization, will stimulate it and provide for its continuity. This type of climate will support the current rare commodity of risk-taking. Too, it will allow the much-needed

integration of institutional functions and collaboration, where now there often is counterproductivity of competitive peers.

Vital Sign VII: Encouraging and Managing Disagreement, Conflict, Differences

We tend to have a rather deep, built-in tendency to regard differences between persons and subgroups as sources of problems and conflict rather than as a major resource and a source of creativity and innovation. Most studies of problem-solving productivity recognize that with each passing decade, the problems that we must solve on our campuses and institutions are increasingly complex and require us to put together a greater diversity of disciplines and expertise in order to have the resources needed to solve the problems appropriately. We have recognized, above, that **one of the most important competencies of campus leadership is to recognize the complementary differences that are needed for problem-solving efforts and to utilize the skills of recruiting and combining the right persons as temporary task forces.** But because the persons with the necessary backgrounds are usually in different departments, and are usually unprepared and unskilled at working together, team-building is one of the most important parts of the repertoire of campus leadership.

In our culture, the notion of compromise generally is a negative idea. It means giving up what is right and best for a more mediocre "compromise" solution. This concept is quite different from some other cultures, such as the Oriental, where compromise means the merging of differences to create a result which is better than anything the participants brought to the process.

One of the exciting challenges for the campus is to find ways of helping differing groups to discover the ideas of creative compromise and the win-win solution. This requires the development of specific listening skills. People must truly hear each other's value differences and needs. A complementary skill to be learned is that of third-party negotiation. It is one of the responsibilities of campus leadership. Most campus communities have a greater variety of differences in disciplines, professions, ethnic and cultural backgrounds, racial differences, and differences of sex and generation than almost any other complex human system. Full use of this human resource will help the campus solve the most difficult problems of campus survival and development, and actualize its potential for creating a vibrant, healthy community.

Vital Sign VIII: Professional Growth Opportunities and Performance Support

One of the critical issues concerning campus health is the level of performance of the faculty in classroom teaching. The repertoire of teaching techniques and the diagnosis of learner readiness and needs is very limited. Most faculty have received little or no training in the designing of participative learning activity. The models they typically use were the models relevant to a different generation of learners and to assumptions about the teaching-learning contract which learning research has shown to be obsolete.

Consequently, perhaps the greatest **quality control challenge for campus administration is to utilize proven methods of upgrading the classroom practices of the faculty. Experience has shown that this cannot be a mandated requirement. It is necessary to use methods of demonstration and of voluntary entry into skill development opportunities.** There is also clear evidence that staff members need the availability of consultative support at the times when they are trying out new approaches to their critical work with students. Clearly participation in professional development activities needs to be a part of the regular work rather than being imposed as an "extra."

The campus that will attract and hold students in the 80s and 90s will increasingly be a campus where teachers have discovered ways to integrate exciting learning content with methods of teaching that turn on students and motivate collaborative inquiry of teachers and learners.

Vital Sign IX: Learnership Growth Opportunities

In the early years of their lives, the occupational role and responsibility for young people is learnership—being an effective, competent student. We do very little to help socialize students into the standards and skills of high quality learnership. So by default we socialize the young into postures of dependency, anti-learning, the "gentleman's C" attitude, or the very dysfunctional pattern of getting high grades but little functional intelligence and little motivation to continue as a lifelong learner. Basic role training for learnership is a key support and stimulus for the improvement of quality in teaching.

One of the most effective ways of upgrading the quality of campus learning in a downsizing budget situation is to help older students, more advanced students, internalize their learning by becoming teachers of the younger students and colleagues of the senior faculty members. **One of the most important inventions in educational technique of the past 25 years has been the discovery of the tremendous effectiveness of utilizing older learners as cross-generation helpers in supporting the teaching-learning process.** In the campuses of the future, most students will be teachers as a part

of the learning program and personal growth process.

Vital Sign X: Reformulate a Comprehensive Information System

The tremendous development of microcomputers, videotape documentation and audiovisual technology has made possible great improvements in the adequacy and quality of student records; early warning system data collection about individual and campus danger signals; and the documentation of successful practices for dissemination.

A reward system for the documentation and dissemination of successful practices, e.g., teaching, counseling, promoting, managing and learning, would give a tremendous boost to the motivation for continuous efforts at improvement in all aspects of campus life.

The development of an informal student network of interviewers makes possible a much-needed feedback system about students' opinions, attitudes, needs and reactions, and also is the basis for one of the most effective student retention activities, i.e., the early identification of negative feelings and inclinations to drop out. The development and operation of an effective information system is a major occupational learning opportunity for students in a wide variety of specializations.

It is hard for most of us at this time to conceive of the impact on the campus of the current revolution in communications technology, and the many ways in which learning opportunities will extend beyond the classroom, beyond the campus, beyond the community, beyond national boundaries. The campus, as a learning community, will indeed be an open system.

Vital Sign XI: Change and Renewal on the Campus

A major challenge for campus leadership is posed by the fact of rapid continuous change. This brings with it the necessity to make transitions and transformations in campus organization, mission, and style of life.

How can a campus change effectively?

First of all, effective changeability involves goal setting and planning as a continuous process, with a high level of involvement of all parts of the community.

Another part of the change mechanism is having in place a continuous process of inquiry and feedback from all parts of the community and a continuous program where leadership can review the feedback and respond to it.

A third aspect of maintaining competent changeability is a process of continuous external scanning of successful practices and

innovations of neighboring systems, especially other campuses.

A leading futurist has maintained that the curve of increase in complexity of problems to be solved in the world is accelerating rapidly. The curve of knowledge and technology about how to solve problems is accelerating at almost the same rate, but a third curve of intention and skill in utilizing the knowledge for problem-solving purposes is accelerating very slowly.

It is, in many ways, a strange fact that **the campus, one of the most comprehensive repositories of knowledge, is one of the least effective integrators and utilizers of this knowledge for its own functioning and improvement of structure and operation.** The knowledge derivation process is much more highly developed in the private sector and in agriculture than on college and university campuses. The healthy campus is one that is self-conscious and methodologically sophisticated in using the knowledge potential that is available on campus to improve its own management and quality of life.

Lastly, another key characteristic of achieving and maintaining changeability is competence in building and utilizing more diverse, complex leadership teams which will include students, alumni, private sector leadership and other vital resources for campus survival and renewal.

Summary: A Vital Sign Checklist

These eleven vital signs of campus health and wellness are a critical checklist for consideration by all campus leaders as they tackle their responsibilities for campus mobilization of the retention effort.

This potential image of campus health and wellness provides a framework for futuring, planning, developing and implementing the mobilization effort. Success in this effort will finally lead to institutional renewal and the building of a campus where a high quality of life is present, and such valued outcomes as student retention, turned-on classroom teaching, responsible involvement of everyone in campus governance, an effective academic community program, and many of the desired results of effective leadership can occur.

A CAMPUS HEALTH-CHECK: ELEVEN VITAL SIGNS

Vital Sign 1: COLLABORATIVE FUTURE-ORIENTED PLANNING

Vital Sign 2: ONGOING STEP-WISE EVALUATION and PROGRESS-CELEBRATION

Vital Sign 3: PARTICIPATIVE MANAGEMENT RIGHTS, RESPONSIBILITIES, ACCOUNTABILITIES

Vital Sign 4: ONGOING COORDINATION, SUPPORT, EVALUATION and FEEDBACK

Vital Sign 5: THE OPEN SYSTEM— SCANNING, SHARING, ADAPTING

Vital Sign 6: INNOVATIVE RISK-TAKING and INTERUNIT COLLABORATION

Vital Sign 7: ENCOURAGING and MANAGING DISAGREEMENT, CONFLICT, DIFFERENCES

Vital Sign 8: PROFESSIONAL GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES and PERFORMANCE SUPPORT

Vital Sign 9: LEADERSHIP GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES

Vital Sign 10: REFORMULATE A COMPREHENSIVE INFORMATION SYSTEM

Vital Sign 11: CHANGE AND RENEWAL ON THE CAMPUS

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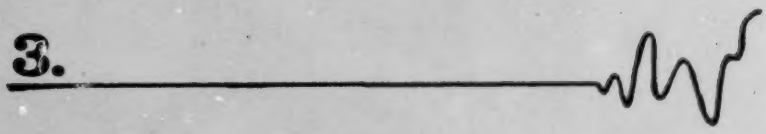

" The successful mobilization effort must be an intentionally planned and managed process . . . "

3.

KEY PRINCIPLES FOR MOBILIZING CAMPUS ACTION

This chapter highlights the key ingredients essential for organizing and guiding the campus retention effort described in Chapters IV and V. The underpinnings of this process are rooted in successful application of organization development and management development concepts and practices. As noted in the previous chapters, achieving and sustaining a healthy campus is the key to retention and is dependent upon a strategic planning process for bringing about the change needed for institutional renewal.

SYSTEMIC APPROACH

The successful mobilization effort must be an intentionally planned and managed process, implemented on a campus-wide basis, and directly related to the institution's mission. It must have the capability for attaining and sustaining optimum institutional efficiency, effectiveness and health and it must deal constructively with external and internal environmental forces for change. It must establish collaborative mechanisms for problem solving as well as for setting, implementing and evaluating the goals, objectives and results of the planned change process.

The mobilization effort must benefit not only the institution but its various members. It must have the support and participation of the faculty, students and staff as well as the support and participation of the administration and the chief executive officer, who must see institutional renewal as a critical campus priority.

CONTINUOUS-CYCLE DATA GATHERING AND USE

Data gathering, diagnosis and feedback must be handled in a systematic and thorough way so that decisions critical to success of the change process can be made and evaluated on the basis of accurate, relevant and timely information. For this to happen, specific mechanisms must be developed for campus-wide discussion,

joint action planning and reassessment of outcomes.

Data collection must be welded to action. Here too, mechanisms must be developed for campus-wide discussion, joint action planning and reassessment of outcomes. Collaboration is essential between those collecting data and those responsible for taking action on it.

Thus, the process is data-based, experience-based and managed against explicit, measurable and obtainable goals, which are established and agreed upon at the many levels and in the many operating units within the institution. In this way data gathering and its use form a self-generating-directing-monitoring-correcting cycle.

CONTINUOUS CAMPUS-WIDE COMMUNICATION

Equally critical as an ingredient for success is the way in which information about the process is shared on campus. Full internal communication is an important dimension of the mobilization effort and cannot be left to chance or left solely to the existing formal mechanism for information gathering and sharing. As an essential ingredient for an open, supportive community, the campus must insure that all members are fully informed and have access to all information about events, successful practices, activities, progress and even failures of the planned change process. There must be communication before, during and after change. Also, documentation of the process is important for evaluation and future planning needs as well as for research and historical purposes.

TEAM NETWORKING FOR COLLABORATION

Whether the American institution of higher education is a comprehensive university, a small liberal arts college or a community college, it tends to be organized and administered, almost without exception, in a hierarchical tradition. As a result, our institutions of higher education are formed individually as a collection of subparts or sectors. They accomplish their work through a variety of groups, committees or councils, and task forces. For the campus to exist as a community, these subparts must recognize that although they serve as an important focus for identity of their members, they are also interdependent as well. In that regard, each subpart or sector must learn how to collaborate with the others to achieve institutional goals as well as their own goals and ultimately learn to collaborate for their own and the institution's survival.

Regardless of its importance, the fact remains that successful collaboration has not been an easy goal to achieve and will become even more difficult to attain in the forthcoming years, which will be marked sharply by limited resources and increased internal and external competition for them.

Achieving permanent and lasting improvement in the college or university requires developing, training and fully using organizational teams as critical building blocks.

The different kinds of teams represented in the mobilization effort are characterized as "family" teams, which are organized vertically campus-wide or by area in that they include senior administrators and subordinates; "cousin" teams, which include colleagues and peers; and "project" teams, which bring together individuals with specific functional experience and expertise.

Ultimately, how the various individuals learn to work together on their respective teams, and how the teams learn to work together within the institution, will be the degree to which the campus achieves the quality of community critical to and necessary for success of retention efforts.

Activities must be developed, therefore, that focus on team building as well as on values clarification within, between and among all teams. Communication, collaboration and congruent action between and among teams must be developed, fostered and enhanced to achieve significant improvement in the quality of working relationships and the work environment.

These efforts along with other team building experiences are critical if there is to be widespread and lasting impact upon the campus. Additionally, but equally important, properly developed organizational teams provide essential risk taking support and personal, team and organizational growth.

CRITICAL ROLE REQUISITES OF THE PROJECT COORDINATOR

Coequal in importance to the team concept is the role of the project coordinator. Success of the mobilization effort depends upon having a skilled project coordinator who has the support, personal motivation, skills and time to meet the requirements of the role. Whether or not the person comes from within the institution or outside is not as important as the background, skills and competencies possessed for the tasks at hand.

The project coordinator's role requires skills and experience to plan, organize, coordinate and manage the mobilization effort. Since the project coordinator is working for the whole institution, the project coordinator must have a strong commitment to its improvement along with the restraint to allow for institutional self-determination.

The project coordinator is a link to outside technical sources and is familiar with other external resources. In this external scanning role, the project coordinator provides important information about the success and failure of activities and processes related to the retention efforts on other campuses.

Thus, the project coordinator must play many roles, which include being a seeker, clarifier and synthesizer of information as well as being a consultant about ideas, opinions and concepts that help campuses test the feasibility of their plans.

The project coordinator is the key link between the institution and the mobilization effort. This necessitates working closely with the chief executive officer and the institution's executives and senior managers, as well as key campus governance leaders.

During the early stages of mobilization, the project coordinator must very quickly build support throughout the campus, work with appropriate individuals to collect initial assessment data, communicate important information, establish the necessary teams and develop relationships with their key members, and begin designing the necessary team training activities. In all these activities the project coordinator must show exceptional care—particularly with the design of events and the process of involving others.

It is during this initial phase that the center of gravity shifts from the chief executive officer to the project coordinator and the newly established teams. As the change process begins to impact upon the campus, the project coordinator plays a variety of roles as project administrator-coordinator, educator-trainer, as well as consultant-facilitator.

It is only through regular day-to-day, face-to-face involvement as well as through the usual telephone consultation and memo support procedures, that the project coordinator will be able to bring about within the campus the translation of good intentions into desired results.

It is obvious as to why a highly qualified project coordinator is so critical to the success of the planned change process. Inability to meet the ambitious expectations for performance will not only harm the retention effort but may seriously damage the institution. The project coordinator should be recruited very early in the planning for the mobilization effort, because the many roles and skills are as crucial for start up activities as they are for later stages.

Just as the project coordinator must have skills for becoming involved and accepted as a critical participant in the process within the campus, he or she must be able to pull back as others develop the critical competencies for maintaining, institutionalizing and renewing the process.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER INITIATION AND MAINTENANCE ROLE

However important the project coordinator's role is, the role of the chief executive officer is equally critical to both the initiation and the

successful maintenance of the mobilization effort.

The chief executive officer must provide the initial excitement, mobilization and coordination of institutional resources. With the project coordinator, the chief executive officer makes project appointments and approves initial program designs and presentations. This initial period must be marked by teamwork and trust between the chief executive officer and the project coordinator. The chief executive officer must feel assurance that realistic accountability measures exist, and that the model will deliver the intended results.

The chief executive officer must play an active role in building support for the project, first with the executive administration and senior management, and then throughout the institution, by legitimizing the initial presentation and guaranteeing support for participation. The chief executive officer should be willing to risk that the project coordinator will do a competent job of interpretation and involvement as well as getting voluntary participation from throughout the campus.

CAMPUS RESOURCE TAPPING

Throughout the mobilization effort, there must be opportunities for participants, both as individuals and as teams, to improve their existing skills and to learn new ones if the desired outcomes of the process are to be optimally achieved.

College and university campuses often are unusually rich in faculty and staff resources with skills in human relations, organizational development, and other technical areas. More often than not these professionals are under-utilized; if involved in the mobilization effort they can be an important asset for helping individuals and teams solve problems, set goals, plan, deal with change and interpersonal and team relations, and conduct other critical mobilization tasks.

Special effort and care should be taken, therefore, to identify, properly enlist and involve these individuals so they fully become part of the retention effort. The proper integration of these resources into the planned change process may be a major influence on its strength and durability.

CAMPUS-WIDE PARTICIPATION

The institution must have a clearly defined and results-oriented program for recruitment and attraction of participants. It is important to note that people support what they create; therefore, active participation gives a sense of ownership which is essential for

the successful retention effort.

The key to effective involvement in the mobilization process is the ability to motivate people to voluntarily participate. Many who should be involved in the process will not be initially ready to respond to invitations for them to become active. This condition requires specially designed activities to assist and give cautious or resistant participants a chance to be exposed without risk before they decide to become voluntarily involved.

Involvement in the mobilization effort must be a legitimate part of institutional work time as much as feasible, although it will require personal time as well. In some situations however, additional paid time or released time might be considered.

Special efforts are needed to assure involvement by a wide spectrum of students, along with faculty and staff. Student involvement is critical, since students are crucial sources of valuable data. Finally, careful attention must be given to insure that students are involved in sufficient numbers to accurately reflect the character of the student body.

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". . . a proactive posture toward futuring puts the emphasis on projecting images of preferred futures and working on ways of achieving them."

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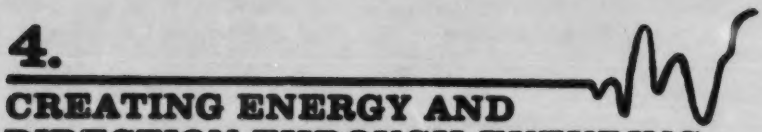

CREATING ENERGY AND DIRECTION THROUGH FUTURING

The successful setting of goals for change and for improvement of the quality of life on campus involves rethinking our orientations to the experiences of the past, our patterns of involvement in the present, and our perspectives on the future. This chapter illustrates briefly some of the distinctions between reactive and proactive orientations towards the past, the present and the future. The bulk of the chapter is devoted to a detailed description of futuring, a process which has been found most effective for mobilizing energy and setting directions to develop the kind of high quality campus life that maximizes student retention.

MAINTAINING THE PAST REACTIVELY OR UTILIZING THE PAST PROACTIVELY

A major tendency in institutional life is to hold on rather tenaciously to the "old way." Thus, traditional ways of conducting admissions, registration, orientation, academic advising, faculty meetings and the myriad other ingredients of campus life and operations are largely protected. Although these particular procedures and activities were invented as appropriate and successful ways to meet specific needs and situations, they may now be outmoded. But, the first natural reaction to requests for change is to defend the way things are done, to defensively "hold on." Generally, the reaction is to make minor modifications that seem to respond to the pressures for change, while making certain there is continuity of the way "things have always been done." Futuring is a powerful and positive tool which allows us to use the wisdom accumulated from the past without being restricted or tied down by it. It requires us to ask, "What is there that we really value from our past? Why do we cherish certain traditions and ways of doing things?" Usually, these are difficult questions, because we do not often perform values analysis or values clarification to determine

what is valued and cherished about the way things are done. But if we are ready to be proactive and to explore ways of maintaining highly valued elements from our past and integrating them creatively with the new resources of information technology, then it is possible to make creative adaptations from past learning. Unfortunately, though, the most common approach to confronting problems of the present has been to focus on the pain of what seems to be wrong. This approach frequently proves debilitating.

Some years ago, a study was made of a variety of groups who began their problem solving work by making a census of the current problems they faced. Observations and tape recordings were made of the sessions. The observers were amazed to discover that as more and more problems were added to the list, the voices became more and more depressed as they reminded themselves of the load of issues with which they had to cope. A second major discovery was that over time, the group members became increasingly involved in mobilizing their personal defenses against the commitment to solve problems. This was identified by the increasing frequency with which, when a problem was listed, the opinion was raised that the cause of such a problem was beyond control. In this way, it was possible for the group to say to themselves that they should not feel guilty about, or responsible for, inactivity.

A third significant discovery was that when groups used this type of problem diagnosis and analysis to determine goals for action, they tended to set goals to get away from pain rather than to solve the problems. Their solutions tended to be short range ones, for they were oriented toward dealing with surface symptoms rather than toward producing exciting or desirable outcomes.

For these reasons, then, groups should focus on "images of potentiality" in contrast to focusing on experiences of here-and-now pain.

Futuring is one way of helping groups achieve a more balanced focus on their here-and-now situations. Futuring facilitates the group's examination of its own present strengths and accomplishments as well as its present problems. The essence of the idea is that the members of the group, usually working in subgroups brainstorm all the satisfactions they can itemize about their present situation (i.e., "the way things are going") and brainstorm all the dissatisfactions they can itemize as well. Then the group members participate in a series of reading and voting activities to prioritize the most satisfying strengths upon which they can build and the most unsatisfactory aspects of situations they need to change.

Futuring brings about a shift in orientation from a reactive, defensive posture about the present to a more proactive orientation. It generates considerably more confidence and motivation about the capacity to do something about the way things are, and provides an

amount of energy and direction that is unusual for such efforts.

REACTIVE ADJUSTING APPROACH VS. THE FUTURING APPROACH

The most typical approach to dealing with future problems is to review the data on trends or extrapolations into the future. These may be trends about the economy, about student populations, about the emergence of new occupations, or about values and lifestyles that may be relevant to participation in higher education. This typical procedure, then, is to examine the probable impact or consequences of these projections on one's own enterprise, such as the future of one's own campus. This is a **reactive** posture, which involves trying to figure out how to adjust to the way things are going to be. The focus is on adjustment rather than on a preferred future. In contrast, a **proactive** posture toward futuring puts the emphasis on projecting images of preferred futures and working on ways of achieving them.

FUTURING: A CASE STUDY

During the past ten years, many organizations, communities and campuses have used this approach to futuring, goal setting and the development of specific outcome action plans. What follows below is a detailed illustration of the proactive approach to future planning based on several key elements of the institutional model presented in Chapter V.

START-UP STIMULUS: THE DECISION FOR ACTION

In this campus case study, the start-up "trigger" was the decision by the vice presidents for academic affairs and student affairs to send a team of three to a workshop on student retention. The team returned from the workshop with the motivation to get something started on campus and with ideas about how to begin. They went to work in the following way.

THE KEY LEADERSHIP MICROSESSION

The team of three identified and invited 20 key campus leaders to join them in a three-hour microsession to "see what it might be like" if they joined in providing leadership for a campus-wide futuring activity. The 20 included five representative student leaders; four key faculty members; four staff members from Student Services; three from administration; two alumni; and two trustees who had indicated a strong wish to be involved in planning activities. The two

vice presidents supported the idea of the session and agreed that they would send the invitations and participate. All the invitations were personal, and expressed the hope that the three-hour meeting would help them assess how the campus could be involved in a significant future-planning activity. It was hoped that the participants in the microsession would become members of strategic planning teams to develop and guide this activity.

The convenor team began the microsession by sharing a number of the trends in higher education they had learned about at the workshop. These trends had led them to conclude that it was crucial to involve their campus in some type of campus-wide planning for the future.

The leaders then led a brief reflective listing by the group of the most important aspects of the identity of their campus, its higher education mission and its type of student body. Some of the older members of the groups were initially the most active, but eventually everybody became involved in determining the most important things about their history and their unique mission as a higher education institution.

The meeting divided into small groups, which made separate lists of the things they were currently proudest about concerning their campus life and activities, and the things they were sorriest about. Each participant then read the sheets on all the tables, and cast two votes at each table for the "proudest proud" and the "sorriest sorry." Each group then reported on what the voting showed were the most serious problems and the greatest strengths.

Next, the groups were introduced to the notion of a "future trip." Each table became a helicopter, going three years into the future to make concrete observations about what they saw that pleased them very much about campus policies, procedures, activities and ways of life.

As a resource for observation ideas, they had posted a list of innovations compiled from other campuses at the front of the room. This list included such items as types of learning activities in classrooms, faculty-student relationships, relationships between administrators and faculty, composition of student body, student services, campus community life styles, involvement of alumni and community, and so forth. Each team then went ahead in time to three years in the future, and wrote observations rapidly on a newsprint sheet about the things that had come to pass that pleased them very much. They were asked to produce as many items as they could, without discussion, so that all possible images of the future might be generated for review and discussion later. Each group put their sheets up on the wall and every participant was given 20 votes to cast, by marking those images of the future that were most significant and that were most desirable to achieve. There were over

a hundred images on the wall. The participants showed a very high level of interest as they went around reading and voting and observing the clusters of checks around certain items.

At this point, the convening team said, "If this were a planning session, we would look at where the clusters of votes for priorities are, and would give everybody a chance to join a temporary task force to spell out some of the action ideas needed to move toward the particular desired goal. But, instead, this is a session about 'planning for planning.' We want to find out whether or not you see this type of activity as a desirable approach to involve the total campus."

The participants felt very positive about the importance of this type of activity as a springboard for forming task forces and moving actively toward goals, and about the importance of futuring as a campus-wide process.

In the discussion that followed, it was agreed that the next step would be the nomination of 200 to 300 key campus leaders from the student body, faculty, university support system, and administration, to generate scenarios for a preferred future for the campus and to work on action plans for enacting those scenarios. The level of interest was clearly very high, and there was some reluctance to stop the momentum toward planning in order to develop strategies of total campus involvement.

The group immediately began a nominating procedure in which they put up a series of sheets with headings for the different parts of the campus population and began to brainstorm a list of key persons who might be considered for participation in a campus-wide futuring event. The group also developed procedures for promotion of the event: should participation be limited to those key persons who would be invited? or should there be an "open meeting" for all who might want to participate? It was decided that there would be about 200 invitees and that an additional 100 could be accommodated on a first-come first-served basis, if more than that number of applicants asked to participate. Furthermore, opportunities would be provided for everyone in the campus community to contribute to the scenarios of the future and to become members of the task forces which would emerge from the futuring session.

All of the microsession participants agreed to work on task forces for invitations, promotion, arrangements and design, and to serve as table group facilitators at the campus-wide workshop.

The evaluation sheet completed at the end of the session indicated a very high level of satisfaction with the meeting, a strong commitment to continue in a leadership role, and acceptance of the team of three as temporary leaders of the continuing planning group. At the end of the meeting, both vice presidents, who had been active participants during the session, made strong statements supporting

the priority of this activity.

The response to this microsession confirmed the team's belief that the campus populations would be ready to collaborate in exploring ways to develop communication and planning. The vice presidents were ready to recruit someone to coordinate the activity, and also to work with off-campus consultants to develop a campus community development design which would use the best principles of organization and community development. They were convinced that a **total system** approach was needed to achieve the goals they desired.

THE CAMPUS-WIDE FUTURING WORKSHOP

Of the 207 invitees, 183 responded positively to the invitation. As a result of the publicity about the session in the student paper, over 200 students returned slips indicating a desire to participate. The first 100 were accepted, and the others received notes that they would receive the proceedings of the session and would be invited to participate in the next phases of the program.

A dry-run leadership session was held for an hour and a half on the day before the conference, in which a run-through of the conference design was provided, with a chance for the table conveners to practice the functions they would have during the day. The committee also divided the participants into subgroups to maximize heterogeneity across age, sex, campus role, and ethnic and racial background. When the participants arrived, their table numbers were already indicated on their registration badges.

The participants marked sign-up sheets indicating what parts of the campus community they belonged to, their years in the community, their age, sex, race and other identifying characteristics, so that by the time everybody had arrived, there was a good picture of "how representative we are of our campus community." As each table group formed, they listed all the ideas they could about the "unique characteristics of our campus community and its educational mission." Each group checked what they considered the most important two or three characteristics, and these were called out and written up on the overhead screen as a joint production of the participants. The day began then with a brief interview of the president of the college about his hopes for the day and what he anticipated might be some of the ways in which his office could respond to some of the ideas that would emerge from the conference. He also shared some of his current concerns about the future of the institution and the importance of its readiness to change and adapt to the changing conditions of the national situation, the composition of the student body, the challenges to the faculty, and so forth.

The conference leadership team made a brief statement about the way in which the participants had been selected and invited and the hope that they would become a network for involvement of the total community.

Each table group was then plunged into a "prouds and sorries project." At the end of ten minutes, everybody was asked to stand up and move around, reading the lists at three or four other tables and at each table, voting for the two "proudest prouds" and "sorriest sorries" from their own perspectives.

As table groups reconvened, they were asked to call out the items with the most votes. These were recorded on the overhead screen. The table groups were then to prepare for the three-year-ahead futuring trip. As a warm-up, some of the participants in the microsession stood up and recalled one future image they had been excited about in the earlier microsession. Each table group then took their future trip, listing as many images of desired futures as they could, with no discussion and with the table conveners encouraging concreteness in the imagery. At the end of the trip period, each participant was asked to spend ten to fifteen votes on the items they felt represented the most important images of the future for the campus.

By the end of the voting period, fourteen items with high clusters of votes had been identified and put up on the overhead projector screen. The staff indicated that the next important job was to spell out in some detail a scenario of what the preferred images of the future might look like if they had been achieved in three years. A representative of each scenario team read the statements publicly. Everyone listened with the awareness that in a few minutes they would have an opportunity to join a temporary task force to begin work on the strategies of action related to each goal. All participants considered two criteria in deciding what temporary task force they would like to join for the afternoon work: where were they most highly motivated and interested? and where did they have resources to offer that they thought could make a significant contribution?

The afternoon work began with distribution of a planning worksheet which took each task force through several steps of activity, including a force field diagnosis of the major restraints and blocks to movement in the direction of the desired goal and the major resources and supports for successful movement. Each group tried to identify all the possible types of action, and prioritized the first steps and supports on campus necessary to launch successful action efforts. Every task force was given a three o'clock deadline to produce a statement of action priorities, a list of essential campus sanctions and supports, a list of additional types of task force members needed, commitments of continuing interest from those in the temporary task force who wanted to continue the work in future

sessions, and a decision about where and when the next task force meetings would be held.

Each task force was given three minutes to report out these critical ingredients of their mission and their future plans. It was made very clear that no one should feel trapped into continuing commitment and that everyone had the right to feel good about simply participating in the conference—if that represented all the time and energy they had to spend. It is of considerable interest that only 15 participants decided that they needed to discontinue their activity.

Each table group was asked to discuss ideas for involving the whole campus in this activity. Out of these discussions, the major recommendations were that a special eight- to ten-page report should be produced by the documentors for campus-wide distribution, in addition to a three- or four-page report in the student paper. It was agreed that there should be an opportunity for others to sign up for work on task forces, and that a campus-wide assembly should be planned in about six months, to report on progress.

Some of the task forces which exhibited the greatest motivation and vigor to move ahead included "Development of student support systems for motivation to learn," "Career planning resources for students," "Helping faculty with burn-out problems," "Getting more personal contact into student advising," "A home base for commuting students," "Development of an alumni network for student recruitment," "Appropriate participation of students in campus government," "Developing the relationship between student leadership and trustees," and "More effective ways to combine study and part-time work." A variety of other topics were also chosen for task force work.

AFTER THE CAMPUS-WIDE FUTURING WORKSHOPS

After the workshop, an explosion of activities occurred: (1) The story of the workshop, disseminated via publication, oral reports, and personal invitations, activated the interest of many more persons on campus. (2) The task forces received support through the meetings of task force leaders with the convenors to work on the designing of effective meetings and the identification of needed resources, and to link the task force work into the appropriate structures and ongoing programs of the institution. (3) A documentation and evaluation team recorded the data generated by these activities, and helped to identify programs. (4) The chief executive officer and other administrative officials provided information and assured sanction, collaboration, and linkage with the trustees. (5) Outside consultants were used for specific training events needed to generate the resources needed for some of the

development efforts. (6) A design team worked on the total campus report assembly.

The sequencing of mobilization activity on each campus will, of course, be different. However, the flow identified and discussed in Chapter V provides an action model for the improvement of quality of life and retention on any college or university campus.

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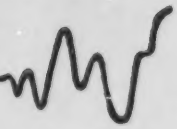

" The phases and steps of the Model . . . describe these dynamics as a flow of change activity. They do so by freezing action at a particular time, as though taking a snapshot."

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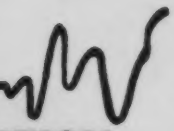


A SYSTEMIC PROCESS MODEL FOR CAMPUS RETENTION

In complex human systems, such as colleges and universities, the network of proactive and reactive responses to change, and the results from those responses, form dynamics so complex that they are difficult to explain or interpet easily. **The phases and steps of the Model which follows describe these dynamics as a flow of change activity. They do so by freezing action at a particular time, as though taking a snapshot.** Anyone looking at this snapshot must recognize that the Model does not intend to fully capture the interactive qualities and changes; it necessarily distorts reality by oversimplifying it. At its best, model building and portrayal is a blend of scientific knowledge and processes and use of human relation skills.

The Model's phases and action steps for creating an environment as described on the following pages represent a holistic and developing process. Each phase and step unfolds along the way; without necessarily clear demarcation, the following phase or step begins to unfold until it also becomes a solid outgrowth of the previous steps and is firmly established. Since the process is dynamic, with cyclical tendencies, areas as well as individuals become involved as they are ready and outcomes are realized with varying degrees of intensities and at different times. It may be helpful to consult the chart on page 63 which describes the Model's flow of action and summarizes its phases and action steps, as the material in this chapter is considered.

INSTITUTIONAL START-UP PHASE

Step 1: Decision to Act

Obviously the decision to act has to start somewhere and has to be perceived as meeting real campus needs. Someone on the campus has to begin creating an awareness of the need for mobilizing the campus to improve retention. One has to begin the process to bring it about.

In the case study described in Chapter IV, the start-up "triggers" were the vice presidents for academic affairs and student affairs, who brought together 20 other campus leaders in a microsession which led to the decision to hold an all-campus workshop. This is only one of many scenarios which can lead to a decision to act across the campus. **The essential activity is the convergence of interest through the microsession to build understanding and support.**

The microsession step must not be conceived as a "presentation to sell approval" session. The total project is too vulnerable at this stage of low awareness and involvement to risk this type of interaction.

Instead, this session is an invitation to elicit consultative brainstorming about the concrete steps and images of what the mobilization can be, what the payoffs can be, what obstacles need to be anticipated and what involvements will be needed.

Primary outcomes of the microsession are deeper understanding of the assumptions and rationale of the systemic approach for mobilizing retention, and an increased awareness of the payoff potential of systemic actions. There are payoffs for the individual participants, for the sectors and major organizational area in which they are involved, and for the entire institution. Those who attend the microsession contribute to thinking through the sequence of activities of the year and help to identify possible issues, traps and key involvements. Perhaps most importantly, there is a readiness to collaborate with a chief executive officer and the project coordinator in establishing campus-wide task forces, estate and major organizational area teams and to support and participate in the all-campus workshop.

Ultimately, however, the chief executive officer of the institution along with other key administrators must come to acknowledge and accept that something must be done to improve the quality of life of the institution and endorse the outcomes of the microsession by making the necessary commitment to act. The commitment must carry with it more than administrative goodwill toward a vague course of action. The decision to act must be a strong commitment for providing direction, competent leadership and the necessary resources for initiating and maintaining a successful mobilization effort. It also means recruiting a project coordinator whose first responsibility is to facilitate translating the decision to act into a pragmatic plan of action.

Step 2: Appointments and Mobilization

The project coordinator begins by establishing a strong working relationship with the chief executive officer and key campus leaders, and with their assistance, selects and trains the initial members of

the project's Retention Resource Team as well as the Data and Communication Project Teams.

Through the nomination process and the microsession, movers and shakers from the different sectors of the campus community are identified for the Retention Resource Team, which must serve as the guiding and sponsoring group seeking change rather than as the arm of the administration.

The various team members and the project coordinator work very closely together during this stage to properly establish relationships, clarify overall issues, agree upon goals, set timelines, develop working action plans and guidelines and help plan the all-campus futuring workshop.

Ultimately, the Retention Resource Team should include individuals from inside and, if necessary, from outside the institution. Members must have among their technical competencies expertise in organizational change, staff training, evaluation and materials development. Additional members selected from the inside also need the support of their peers, clear understanding of the project goals, the ability to stimulate interest, and a strong desire to support the professional growth and organizational change that will create a holding environment. Additionally, all members must have strong commitment to the effort so it will be given high priority in their work schedules. During this phase team members also participate in extensive training activities to insure that the processes used in the mobilization effort will become internalized on campus.

Core members for the Data and Communication Project Teams are nominated in the microsession and additional members with needed expertise are added as the project develops.

The process for creating a holding environment requires the Data Project Team to provide for data collection, interpretation and dissemination.

To begin its work, the Data Project Team identifies the existing data base information relevant to the effort, and identifies processes for collecting other data. The Data Project Team also develops strategies with the Retention Resource Team in order to create a campus-wide understanding of the mobilization effort through the use of relevant data.

The Communication Project Team works to achieve the full internal communication required by the mobilization effort. Staff and student newspapers or newsletters, special retention newsletters, and special information programs for all members of the campus are effective for this purpose. Additionally, the Communications Project Team establishes itself as a clearinghouse for all project information,

responding to internal and external inquiries and documenting the project for evaluation, future planning and historical purposes.

INSTITUTIONAL INTERNALIZATION PHASE

Implicit in internalization of the change process is the achievement of campus-wide understanding and the identification, support and involvement of sufficient numbers of administrators, faculty, students and staff. **It is only when planned changes are internalized by the campus that ultimate success can be assured.** A very clear, well-defined understanding on the campus must be established by the Resource Retention Team about the needs, goals and justification for the undertaking as well as the benefits from participating in it.

To provide a truly collaborative process, administrators, faculty, staff and students must be able to participate in the mobilization effort at large, as members of their respective estates, or in the context of their major organizational areas.

After the initiation of the project by "pioneer" teams and leaders, three cycles of involvement normally are expected before the whole campus is involved and participating. To wait for everyone to be ready, or to try to mandate participation of everyone, results in negative response, resistance, and negative regard by those whose involvement is critical to start-up. If instead those who are ready are encouraged and supported as they move through the start up and/or internalization phases, others see them as models and follow without resistance, though at slower speeds.

Step 3: Campus-wide Futuring Workshop

The activities of the campus-wide futuring workshop are documented in the case example in Chapter IV. It is in this setting that participants from throughout the campus community along with the estates and major organizational area team members are fully exposed to the activities, resources and steps necessary for mobilizing the campus to create a holding environment.

The workshop includes among its design elements and major content areas background information about attrition and retention, opportunities to explore practices that have been successful at other campuses, activities for bringing about change, and assessment of campus-based resources. Additionally, participants develop action strategies and engage in the necessary training for establishing effective task forces as well as estate and major organizational area teams.

Additional outcomes include campus-wide awareness and acceptance of the plan for creating a holding environment;

identification and involvement of committed faculty, students, staff and alumni; and a workshop report, which documents the campus retention effort so that it may be shared with those campus members who did not participate.

Step 4: Formation and Mobilization of Campus Task Forces, Estates and Major Organizational Area Teams

As a result of the campus-wide futuring workshop there is enormous energy and direction for launching activities throughout the institution. Campus task forces are formed and statements of priorities are developed; needed sanctions are identified, as well as support from other parts of the campus system needed for success. Critical to success, however, is the way in which the remainder of the campus community is involved in these activities.

Task forces are appointed to deal with the issues and activities that cut across the whole institution. But at the same time there must be significant involvement to infuse and internalize the energy and direction resulting from the off-campus workshop into the existing institutional structure and system.

Core estate and major organizational area workshop participants form into teams and return to their respective sectors trained and ready for involving others who have become ready to participate in retention and futuring activities. It is necessary to underscore that for full institutional internalization the estate and major organizational area teams are critical elements.

Although it is recognized that institutions vary both in size and complexity, it is **strongly recommended that each institution, regardless of size, establish estate teams.** However, major organizational area teams can and should vary depending upon the specific institution and its organizational structure. When they are formed, they include the chief administrators of the respective area as well as representatives in sufficient number from each of the major organizational area's estates.

For example, a very small institution might establish only one major organizational area team representing the total campus. At other somewhat larger institutions there might be major organizational area teams organized according to departmental and divisional lines. Comprehensive multipurpose institutions might develop their major organizational area teams parallel with the structure of academic colleges and administrative divisions to insure the widest possible but manageable representation and involvement of their faculty, staff and students.

It is through the all-campus futuring workshop that the initial energy for mobilizing the campus retention effort is generated. The **campus task forces, estate and major organizational area teams**

provide the vehicles for translating that energy into system-wide action that becomes infused into the on-going sectors and structures of the institution, and thus internalized as a critical part of the self-generating-directing-monitoring-correcting renewal cycle.

CAMPUS ASSESSMENT PHASE

Step 5: Formation and Mobilization of the Campus Quality of Life Council

The Campus Assessment Phase is characterized by trained teams of faculty, students and staff conducting futuring and retention activities throughout the campus with special concentration in their respective estates and major organizational areas. As a result of widespread participation throughout the campus, at all levels and in all sectors, these activities identify diagnostic systems data about the institution's desires and capacity to accept change, its images of the holding environment, and campus readiness for becoming involved in the retention effort.

This phase begins with the project coordinator and Retention Resource Team helping to establish a Campus Quality of Life Council comprised of representatives at large and from all estate and major organizational area teams. The Council provides necessary linkages for interunit collaboration and communication and is a critical element in the campus-wide assessment and feedback phase of the retention effort. The chief executive officer and project coordinator provide leadership and a statement of expectations at the first meeting of this crucial campus steering group. The Retention Resource Team develops a futuring kit and meets with the Campus Quality of Life Council to refine the kit for campus-wide use.

The council works with campus task forces, estate and major organizational area leadership to recruit volunteers for futuring teams, develops plans for campus-wide futuring sessions, and along with the Retention Resource Team, trains "futuring team members" in use of the futuring kit and in futuring activities. This broadly based leadership structure with strong representation from all estates is mobilized to provide direction for grassroots campus assessment through futuring sessions.

The activities of this phase culminate in readiness for the all-campus assembly, conducted by the Campus Quality of Life Council, at which delegates from all campus task forces and major organizational areas report on their futuring sessions and outcomes of their various team activities and work together to derive system-wide institutional action plans with appropriate goals, objectives and activities for creating an enhanced staying environment.

Step 6: Diagnosis and Feedback

Trained volunteers working in pairs in each estate and major organizational area convene structured group inquiry sessions to identify present "prouds" and "sorries," desired images of the future, and action priorities for direction of campus change and development.

The Retention Resource Team works with the Campus Quality of Life Council and futuring teams; it coordinates processing of feedback information, including analyzing, summarizing and presenting findings. As a result, there is widespread participation of all campus sectors in group futuring sessions.

A campus-wide network is established, fully involving representatives from all estates who are trained in the futuring and information-gathering processes. This results in highly accurate, basic diagnostic data about campus desires and the capacity to accept change, clarified images of the holding environment, and determination of readiness to become involved in the retention effort. Finally the network and foundation will emerge for convening the all-campus assembly.

DESIGNING A PLAN AND ATTAINING COMMITMENT FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Step 7: All-campus Assembly

During this phase the full results of the data project team's efforts are considered, together with information generated from campus-wide futuring activities.

The Retention Resource Team and Campus Quality of Life Council design a campus assembly and work through the Communication Project Team to publicize the assembly and to invite participants.

The chief executive officer and project coordinator provide leadership for the effort and the Campus Quality of Life Council members lead action derivation sessions.

Assembly participants identify points of consensus and difference throughout the campus, and they design action plans for bringing about the enhanced holding environment. In doing so, retention activities, programs and services are linked together in a comprehensive approach for campus action. This effort includes identifying the tasks, strategies and persons who need to be involved, as well as budgetary resources, if necessary, for implementation. Priorities are determined, and a timetable is developed.

The assembly is a very dynamic process and includes opportunities for participants to interact with the chief executive officer and key administrators in developing plans for creating an enhanced holding environment.

Step 8: Campus Response to Recommendations

It is important to point out and emphasize that as a dynamic, organic process, the energy released in the activities leading to the campus-wide assembly has already resulted in implementation of many recommendations and has caused many others to be seriously considered for imminent implementation. In any campus-wide endeavor as broadly conceived and mobilized as this, there are uneven levels of aspiration as well as accomplishment. The decision to implement a retention activity or idea can be made and will be made by individuals or by small groups of individuals within each estate or subdivision of the major organizational areas. However, **there are many outcomes that cannot be accomplished without formal sanction and institutional commitment and support.** Scenarios around these activities must be sent to the chief executive officer and subjected to formal campus administrative processes for review and action and, if approved, for assignment of budgetary and manpower resources.

As a result of this process, if modifications are called for, they are jointly assessed and resolved by the chief executive officer and project coordinator in consultation, if necessary, with the Retention Resource Team and Campus Quality of Life Council. The Communication Project Team assists in all stages and steps of this phase in sharing information and in documenting events. Additionally, it has responsibility for communicating the full scope of retention plans and activities which are being implemented or are ready for implementation.

IMPLEMENTATION PHASE

Step 9: Implementing Action Plans

This phase requires active involvement of the existing campus administrative network as well as specially constituted volunteer task groups and/or committees to implement the various retention action plans, programs, activities and services.

As in any organic change process, no matter how carefully the many facets of mobilization have been managed and planned for, the unforeseen always occurs. The project coordinator, Retention Resource Team, the Campus Quality of Life Council, the Data Project Team and the Communication Project Team serve as available resources for overcoming any hurdles which may exist.

Training continues to be a key activity in this phase as those who have been charged with the responsibility for implementing the agreed-upon action plans, whether part of their normal work assignment or an ad hoc activity, will need to develop skills and expertise for successful implementation.

RENEWAL PHASE

Step 10: Review, Celebration and Renewal

Successful mobilization is a cyclical activity in the life of the campus. As the processes for planned change become infused in the institution's behavior, each year's cycle becomes accomplished more naturally and the desired results are more easily achieved. **Evaluation is a central and critical part of every phase and each step.** It is of equal importance to assess both the process involved and the end results it achieves; and **findings must be shared not only with the key participants but with the total campus community.**

Institutions are not any different than individuals: both need to celebrate their successes. Whether a campus celebrates its accomplishments is an important consideration that should not be left as an unplanned spur-ot-the-moment gesture. Celebration is an integral part of the institution's renewal and growth cycles. How a campus celebrates its success is one of the indicators of its quality of life.

SYSTEMIC MODEL:
Mobilizing Campus Retention

START-UP PHASE

Step 1: Decision to Act
Step 2: Appointments and Mobilization

INSTITUTIONAL INTERNALIZATION PHASE

Step 3: Campus-wide Futuring Workshop
Step 4: Formation and Mobilization of Campus Task Forces, Estates and MOAs

CAMPUS ASSESSMENT PHASE

Step 5: Formation and Mobilization of the Campus Quality of Life Council
Step 6: Diagnosis and Feedback

ACTION PLANNING PHASE

Step 7: All-campus Assembly
Step 8: Campus Response to Recommendations

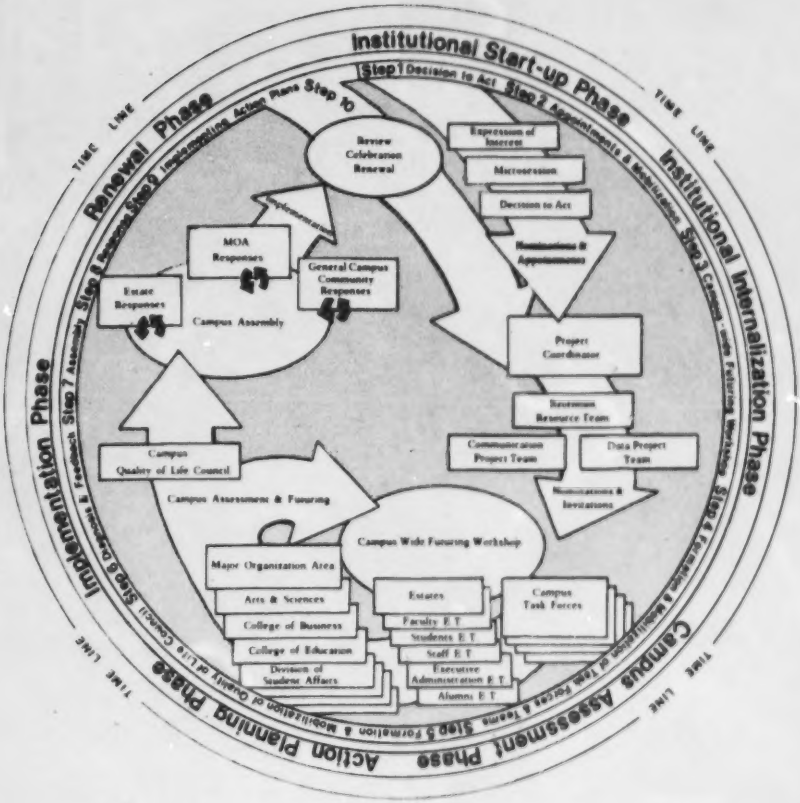
IMPLEMENTATION PHASE

Step 9: Implementing Action Plans

RENEWAL PHASE

Step 10: Review, Celebration and Renewal

SYSTEMIC MODEL :
Mobilizing Campus Retention



6.

" Specific generic issues inevitably evolve on all campuses as change is prompted."

6.
IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES AND OBSTACLES

Specific generic issues inevitably evolve on all campuses as change is prompted. The first part of this chapter identifies those key issues and suggests pragmatic ways to cope with them. The last part of the chapter focuses on some of the obstacles that will naturally occur as the Model is implemented, and provides direction and strategies for overcoming each of them.

ISSUE 1: THE SEGMENT APPROACH VS. THE SYSTEMIC APPROACH

Frequently, retention efforts are focused on a specific area of the campus, where "pain" is obvious or acute. Implementation tends to focus on specific offices or functions, and the process often is characterized by biases in favor of campus subparts, participation problems and feudal behaviors. At the end, these efforts typically produce some evidence of positive results, and the prior pain is somewhat relieved. This is an example of the segment approach; and while the segment approach can improve conditions, it has limited power to do so.

A systemic approach has the greatest power to affect the quality of campus life and retention. This is because retention is a systemic or system-wide problem. This also is why new pains and different symptoms frequently surface elsewhere in the system, and as time passes the retention problem seems to "re-emerge" or worsen.

Improvement in retention is dependent upon changing the systemic variables on campus. Therefore, any mobilization effort must have the capacity to deal with the campus system as a whole. Diagnosis and change concerning a systemic problem such as retention simply cannot be made in one place without considering their effect on the larger system. Failure to employ a systemic

approach produces resistance to change, displacement of pain, participant passivity and system improvements that are vitiated by the more enduring underlying problems.

ISSUE 2: THE CRISIS OF OWNERSHIP PHENOMENON

It seems indisputable that strong stewardship of our colleges and universities is vital in meeting the challenges of the next two decades. However, a number of forces are at work which make stewardship especially difficult. The campus community has been referred to as organized anarchy, and it can seem so when we look at some of the most prominent characteristics of higher education in America. Seven sets of conditions are observable: (1) Colleges and universities have unclear missions and confused goals. (2) Post-secondary education in the United States is marked by a degree of diversity that is unknown in any other educational system in the world. (3) The external environment continues to force the little basic change that occurs within the campus community. (4) The estates within the community hold competing expectations, demands and desires. (5) Bigness and complexity are the rule. (6) Compartmentalization, differentiation, specialization, segmentation and hierarchy are primary structural characteristics. (7) Organizational dynamics are affected by professionalism, unclear technologies, unclear results, demographic depression, fluid participation and demands for accountability.

Crisis of ownership. These conditions hold many implications for mobilization efforts, but one major result is especially worth mentioning. When change is initiated within the campus community, the seven conditions form to cause a phenomenon that is a "crisis of ownership," where energies and resources are expended on the question of "Who owns the college?" This process of explicit and implicit claim and counterclaim to ownership can go on and on; but it will have virtually no positive consequences for the campus community. Its negative consequences are powerful; they can drain and diffuse any serious change effort. Unfortunately, this process also impairs leadership's capacity for its critical leading responsibilities.

Commitment to Stewardship. There is, however, one requisite if this issue is to be confronted successfully, and it centers around the question of "Who owns the college?" It is desirable to begin with a conscious commitment to "stewardship" rather than ownership. The definition of stewardship assumes "we" instead of "me," and confirms that campus community ownership must be by all rather

than by some, if its good health and promising future are to develop. Commitment to this view alone is a giant step forward.

ISSUE 3: MOVING WITHOUT SANCTION AND OBTAINING SANCTION

Sanction of the retention effort and its critical tasks is a basic ingredient for mobilization success; obtaining sanction and interest can present special challenges. Moving without sanction or trying to move without widespread campus interest may also seem to pose problems.

Moving Without Sanction. One of the first issues to confront the mobilization effort arises when there is a general feeling that sanction and interest will be nearly impossible to gain, and that preliminary movement will be ineffective without executive sanction and complete campus interest.

There are varying degrees of readiness between and within colleges, and sometimes this readiness for action is significantly "behind" the need for action. **The large, complex university is a primary example of a setting in which initiation of campus-wide action currently is at least ready for immediate application of this system-wide approach.**

However, even in these settings, it is not necessarily true that no part of the university community is ready. And actions should start with the community subparts that are ready. From the successes and experiences of such mini-change efforts will come increased awareness, skills and readiness by others when participants share their experiences. Not only will these mini-change efforts produce some positive results for retention, but they are vital preliminary steps if successful, wider mobilization is to occur and larger underlying campus problems are to be resolved.

Getting Sanction. Perhaps the most powerful stimulator of both interest and sanction, though, is implementation of the microsession concept which was described in Chapter IV. Use of this method allows executives to experience, firsthand, the major components of the mobilization's promise in just a few hours. In the hands of an experienced and highly skilled consultant or project coordinator, the microsession convinces the executive and trustees that the change process is necessary and is a powerful tool to produce desirable outcomes. This usually leads quickly to the decision to sanction the effort. This experience also provides essential information and keeps the executive from attitudes that will be critical in the forthcoming start up phase.

ISSUE 4: ORDERING CHANGE

Chapter III briefly outlined the critical role of the chief executive officer. In this regard, one especially crucial issue regularly emerges: one particular misstep by the executive can cause the mobilization effort to flounder.

This misstep involves the executive's eagerness for accountability and results and the willingness to use full executive powers to order change. The net effect is likely to be the immediate activation of overt resistance and undercurrents of resistance to change, which so seriously debilitate activities that the change effort is doomed to fail.

Executive Experience, Leadership Style, and Mode of Operation. Those executives who have worked in participatory situations, who perform well in such settings, and who operate within an organizational structure and tradition which support participatory management are least likely to have to confront this issue.

Executives who have a power orientation or prefer to exercise central control, and who lack direct experience with participatory involvement will almost certainly confront this issue. If the operating traditions and structures of the organization also support top-down control, susceptibility is even further enhanced. The stress point centers on the executive's confidence and patience with the ability of the collaborative process to produce desirable results.

The Project Coordinator's Ability. When the executive can comfortably put full confidence and trust in the project coordinator's skills and judgements, the temptation for executive intervention is minimal. Of course, a lack of appreciation for the project coordinator's role or a lack of trust in the project coodinator's abilities can spur an executive to initiate central control actions.

Thus, extreme care must be taken in choosing a skilled project coordinator. The qualities and expectations of the project coordinator are discussed in Chapter III.

ISSUE 5: PROVIDING REWARD AND SUPPORT

On occasion, the wrong kind or wrong degree of support may be requested or given. Sometimes too much support is asked for and provided, and sometimes too little support is provided.

Legitimate Institutional Work Support. Specific decisions about support should be situationally assessed. When it is not consistently evident that high value is given to the campus retention effort, then the validity of support decisions is called into question.

It is important to remember that not all responsibilities assigned in

the change process can be added to the ongoing job responsibilities of campus community members. Involvement in the mobilization effort must be seen as legitimate institutional work, rather than as something to be squeezed in during a lengthened lunch hour. In limited places, release time is appropriate; in other places, changes in time priorities may be called for. This is not to say, however, that all else must stop at the college and that exclusive priority must be put on mobilization efforts.

Financial Support. Both direct and indirect financial support is required for any comprehensive campus mobilization effort. The cost of supplies and materials, possible consultant fees, limited release time, and project coordinator costs are examples of incurred costs. However, most of the needed human resources are a natural part of the community; and since voluntary participation is the keystone to the campus retention effort, direct labor costs are minimal. Compared to other major initiatives undertaken by the college or university, the financial costs of the change effort are proportionately small. This is so even when the significant returns which can be expected from the investment are disregarded.

Executive Support. Perhaps as important as financial resource support is the commitment to a different view of executive support. Primary executive support is given simply by letting the collaborative process work. This calls for executive patience and restraint; it calls for faith in the process, with a short term moratorium on directives and the use of vertical power.

Reward Support. Support must be strategically provided by rewarding small steps of progress. One of the most effective ways to assure full involvement is to help individuals in groups identify ways in which they wish to celebrate each critical step of progress in the path toward their specified retention goals.

Of course this implicitly assumes that there must be detailed written definitions of the steps of progress and clear identification of specific criteria to be used as evidence that desired results have been accomplished. This definition process is a requirement for having accountable movement towards clear outcomes; it also provides an important opportunity for the group to initiate meaningful recognition of its own progress. This in turn helps spur movement and sustain momentum.

ISSUE 6: CHANGE NEEDS AND CONSERVATISM NEEDS

Every campus community contains the "forces of change" and the "forces of conservatism." The forces of conservatism include the campus community's values, identities, traditions and structures

that have been built over time and are usually deeply woven into the fabric of the community and its subparts. The key to successful confrontation of this issue lies within the behavior of the enthusiast for change. **The mistake most often made is to confront, devalue or ignore the community's powerful conservative elements. Since these conservative elements are the core aspects of group and campus identity they should be treated as strengths to build upon.**

To do this, initiators of successful change must **encourage the collaborative pursuit of answers to the following three questions: (1) What do we wish to retain? (2) With what are we dissatisfied? and (3) What do we wish to become?**

ISSUE 7: SIMULTANEOUS SYSTEM MAINTENANCE, DISEQUILIBRIUM AND INTEGRATION

When mobilizing the campus for retention, three different processes must simultaneously occur: system maintenance; system disequilibrium; and system integration. They must happen at the correct time, in the appropriate place, and in the proper shape and amount. This fact presents two critical dilemmas.

The first dilemma involves the cross-current of system maintenance as it collides with system disequilibrium from the mobilization efforts. The critical issue requires campus members to determine how much and in what ways the established system can be stirred up so that appropriate change is possible without causing major damage to the system. Additionally, there is the lesser but very practical problem of optimally conducting everyday business: the college's basic business must continue and should not be disrupted by the mobilization effort.

The second dilemma involves the need for system integration. Most frequently preoccupation with the retention mobilization effort causes a failure to fully recognize that this effort is a temporary system process. Thus, there is not always the care to integrate lasting awareness, skills, values and structural changes from the temporary system into the permanent system. Since achievements of the initial mobilization effort result from temporary system energy, it is not possible to create ongoing campus renewal or changeability without such integration. The latter is necessary to help the campus anticipate and adapt to changing conditions.

What are the answers to these two dilemmas? There is no single path to fixed answers. All three processes must be monitored and influenced; and optimum results seem to pivot on the involved principals' keen awareness of these three processes, their strong skills and good judgement, and the quality of their face-to-face interactions with one another.

ISSUE 8: EXECUTIVE FEAR OF DECENTRALIZATION

Today's human organizations, including the campus, are not structurally organized to cope with the challenges or tasks that will arise in the 80s and 90s. Nor are the technical procedures and skills fully extant on campus for implementing the new management patterns which will match these tasks. **The two campus patterns found today, the hierarchical pattern and the paternalistic pattern, are in various stages of dysfunction, and require modification.**

What is needed is development of a "flattened" pattern, customized to fit the unique needs of each campus. This pattern's most prominent feature is a flattening of the structure of power and responsibility. This is accomplished by decentralizing well-clarified responsibilities and centralizing crucial coordination and linking functions. New teamwork skills, new feedback and alarm procedures, and system-wide communication networking will be required.

There is, however, a natural and almost universal reluctance within top leadership to give up the current hierarchical structures that are limping along on many campuses. While it is true that the present patterns are not working very well, leadership has intimate familiarity with them and knows their distinct limitations. Accordingly, leadership's expectations about the system's capability have been reduced to fit the reality that there is natural resistance to making the transition from a system that already exists and is working, to a new system that is unfamiliar.

Becoming fully engaged in the mobilization effort is the best strategy for dealing with this issue. Additionally, it seems useful to reinforce the view that leadership's sustained fear of power decentralization is not necessary. There actually will be a restoration of the power that has been eroded in recent years at all levels in the campus system. Furthermore, centralization will not disappear or weaken. In fact it must be strengthened to meet today's intricate and demanding coordinative and linking requirements.

ISSUE 9: CAMPUS UNIQUENESS

In no two campus communities will the appropriate mobilization design be identical, though there may be strong resemblances. The retention effort must be customized to fit the uniqueness of each campus.

There are three special dangers here. The first involves executives who prefer "packaged" responses to problems, or who avoid or deny that major problems exist. This kind of leadership has a tendency to want to adopt a complete change-model, and mandate its use.

The second danger lies with change agent and retention experts.

Too often consultants are viewed, or view themselves, as having a doctor's bag of miracle drugs: specific strategies that will produce guaranteed specified results. These special potions are well advertised and are sold at premium prices to those who need assistance. Unfortunately, productive system-wide mobilization does not result from this kind of doctoring.

The third major danger is the tendency for human organizations to make the mistake of trying to reinvent the wheel rather than assessing, adapting and applying what already exists to their unique situation. Unfortunately, intentional and continuous scanning for innovations is uncommon. External and internal scanning involves concerted, systematic and ongoing data and information gathering to determine what is working best and why. External scanning is best when it is aimed at similar institutions, because it identifies the innovations that are most likely to be directly relevant and readily adaptable. Routine internal scanning may require changes in traditional on-campus practices and in the reward system if stimulation and reinforcement of innovators and innovations is to occur. The degree to which external and internal scanning are present is a sure sign of campus renewability and health.

It is obvious that **the key to the campus retention effort is the process, and the process must be carefully and expertly tailored to the specific campus community's requirements. Simple or fixed designs and approaches cannot work well. The Model must be systemic, comprehensive, flexible and capable of modification, and it must be able to promote organic development after start-up.**

In addition to these nine issues, which every campus engaged in mobilization to improve the quality of life must confront, there are ten obstacles which campus innovators may or may not have to surmount.

OBSTACLE 1: GUARANTEEING DIRECT PARTICIPATION

The most common form of participation within the campus community is permanent and temporary represention of the various subparts or vested interests. This can be an obstable because not only is the quality of participation affected, but it also purposely limits the quantity of persons.

The change process must also include opportunities for all persons who want to **directly** participate in the process to have face-to-face interaction with others. This involvement vastly improves essential communication linkage and personalizes the process. It also provides opportunities for shared learning, team-building and collaboration. And it can be expected to ease the implementation of desired changes.

OBSTACLE 2: INVOLVING MOVERS AND SHAKERS

Another obstacle with which we are all familiar concerns selection for participation in any important campus community project: **the same few people from the "traditional system" seem to be repeatedly selected.** Obviously, this results in exclusion rather than inclusion, and it must be guarded against. It is absolutely necessary to guarantee voluntary but wide participation and collaboration in various activities for the change effort. **Involvement of the campus community's real "movers and shakers" is an essential component.**

One effective method for gaining improved voluntary participation of key influencers within the campus community is by nominating key persons—people whose influence and example will "ripple" throughout their sector of the campus community—for invitation.

This procedure can be implemented by careful attention to six major steps: (1) Using the advice of the institution's resource team, the project coordinator decides which community segments or estates are to be represented. (2) The resource team identifies a minimum of two "informants" in each of the community's segments identified above. (3) There is direct follow-up with the identified informants to request names of persons "who are most listened to" or persons "who can make things happen" in the pertinent segment. They are asked to list ten persons in rank order, with a first choice given a score of ten, second nine, and so forth. (4) The project coordinator reviews the submitted list and initially determines whether there is much duplication in names on the list. If there is little overlap, the project coordinator should generally seek additional nominations. (5) Scores from the lists are combined to determine the number of persons who will be selected from each segment. Attention may also be paid to other invitation criteria such as age or sex. (6) It is preferable to include a handwritten note from someone on the institutional resource team who knows the person to whom the invitation is to be sent. The letter of invitation begins with "you have been nominated as one of the (**number**) key persons within the campus community who can make an important contribution to (**description of activity**). We look forward to your being a participant of the (**name of activity**) at (**date, time, place**)."

OBSTACLE 3: MAINTAINING AN OPEN, ONGOING PROCESS

Once the change process is under way, excitement about the process and its prospects and the obvious importance of the activity will stimulate new interest for participation.

One obstacle can be failure to keep the process open for new entrants. Since a "snowballing effect" can be expected as the participation norm, there must be an ongoing "open door." New

participants should be welcome at virtually any point in the process.

Another related obstacle is failure to prepare for ongoing "orientation" of these new entrants. Without orientation, it is difficult for the new entrant to gain the knowledge, skills and information that will allow for their full participation. Lack of orientation will also cause dropouts to increase.

OBSTACLE 4: PROVIDING NECESSARY PARTICIPATION SKILLS

As we might expect the change process often requires special knowledge, behaviors and attitudes that are not already possessed by everyone in the campus community. Thus, the campus members' attitudes toward expedience, time demands and other related factors are the key to overcoming this obstacle. **These forces all too frequently push project participants into roles for which they are inadequately prepared. A primary result is significant resistance to change, and low-quality performance.**

Overall **responsibility for avoiding and coping with this obstacle lies with the project coordinator and the institution's resource team.** They will employ a variety of methods to prepare participants for new behaviors and tasks. For example, frequently role playing and simulation are used to provide opportunities for skill practice and risk-taking rehearsal. In addition, they will use a variety of techniques for providing "at-the-elbow" support, e.g., debriefing of "how it is going," telephone consultation, resource "tool-kits," and collaborative teaming. They also will call upon the rich resources that already exist on most campuses. Use of these resources is cost-effective and fits the participatory design for the change process.

OBSTACLE 5: INVOLVING THE MARGINALS

Every campus community has a small number of persons who are extremely sensitive and responsive to realistic change; they often are innovators themselves. These persons are rarely seen by themselves or others as a part of the "established" campus community. Frequently they have special linkages and contacts in other areas and at other campus communities. Sometimes they are viewed as "troublemakers."

Because of these characteristics, it is possible, even probable, that not all the marginals will be nominated for participation in the change process. Therefore, **special efforts must be made to identify these persons for some form of inclusion in the process.** In addition, these persons can often serve valuably as ongoing "innovation scanners" within the collaborative effort, and they should be involved in this way whenever feasible.

OBSTACLE 6: LEGITIMIZING AMBIVALENCE AND USING RESISTANCE

Ambivalence to change and resistance to change are two blocking forces which always present themselves when major mobilization efforts are undertaken. Lack of Awareness about and inability to cope with these two forces have doomed many campus-wide change efforts and have thoroughly frustrated those who have been involved in such efforts. Since these forces are qualitatively different, they are treated separately.

Ambivalence to Change. Initiation of campus-wide mobilization inevitably activates individual and group ambivalence towards the process and content of change. Positive and negative feelings are activated and they push toward each other to impede action.

On the positive side, there often is at least some discomfort with the current status of things, and this generally is coupled with the feeling that change might improve the situation. On the negative side, there is a conscious or unconscious caution about the risks and energies that are required for a change effort.

Where the obstacle emerges is when one ignores the activated underground of ambivalence, or misjudges it as resistance which must be fought. Knowledgeable retention effort participants regard this ambivalence quite differently.

It is reasonable and normal for persons to be ambivalent when considering their commitment to using energy and resources and taking risks; and the key to avoiding this obstacle is in providing widespread opportunities for open expression of concerns, anxieties, fears, hopes, wishes and expectations—in other words, in accepting ambivalence as normal.

From these expressions of doubt and caution will come valuable information to assist in identifying blind alleys, other obstacles and unexpected alternatives. In this way, it is possible to identify individuals and groups which require more attention and time in the working-through process. Everyone will not be ready to start work or change at the same time or with the same energy and commitment.

Resistance to Change. Outright resistance to change also is a natural phenomenon. While it cannot be eliminated, it can be substantially minimized and used to work for the retention effort rather than against it.

TEN WAYS TO WORK WITH RESISTANCE

1. Always maintain two-way communication.

2. Never "punish" resistance, because punishment only reinforces it.

3. Facts which point to the need for change should be gathered by the very persons who are to be most affected by it.

4. Truly care about the feelings of those who will be most affected by the change; and help those affected to make explicit what their feelings are and what can be done about them.

5. Do not predetermine that major resistance is "illegitimate"; often it is not, and it can be the source of valuable information to improve and guide the process.

6. Special working-through, directed by the project coordinator, is required whenever there are efforts to change individuals or segments of a group which, if successful, would have made them deviate from the norms of the group. If the norms of the group also undergo complementary change, however, individual resistance will be further minimized.

7. Take the initiative to engage communication directly aimed at confronting, sharing and probing the negative feelings and opinions of resistors. The following will help: clarify issues; identify alternatives and points for negotiation; produce a degree of group and individual support through objectivity; and provide a useful mechanism for venting feelings.

8. Look for opportunities to forge creative compromise and to negotiate win-win solutions.

9. Provide learning opportunities specially designed to build a sense of participant confidence and competence about new situations and tasks.

10. Though at an early point the retention effort must be sanctioned by the executive or supervisors, it should never be mandated by them or presented in a way such that is construed as constituting change from the top down.

OBSTACLE 7: PROVIDING REHEARSAL OPPORTUNITIES

One of the most destructive results of many mobilization efforts is that persons may be pushed into new roles and performance requirements for which they are not adequately prepared. There are a variety of methods to provide preparation for new behaviors and tasks. Frequently, role playing and simulation are used to provide a chance to experience "what it will be like." Skill practice methods provide opportunities to try out, get feedback and retry and repractice in situations where one is not playing for keeps. Such techniques of simulation provide an opportunity to explore the consequences of alternative ways of coping with new situations. Every initiator of planned change has an ethical responsibility to provide opportunities to rehearse new risk-taking requirements before they must be dealt with in reality. Having a sense of confidence and competence about new situations and tasks is one of the most effective ways to reduce resistance to change. Unfortunately, only a small percentage of "intentions to try something new" are actually tried out in the real situation. This is because at the time of genuine risk-taking there is no "at-the-elbow" support available to help cope with the new situations to be faced and the new behavior to be tried out. Facilitators of successful change utilize a variety of techniques for providing "at-the-elbow" support, e.g., debriefing of "how it's going," opportunities for telephone consultation, provision of supportive resource materials and tools, and teaming with others to provide collaborative risk-taking teammates.

OBSTACLE 8: CELEBRATING AND REWARDING PROGRESS

The process of changing should be a zestful experience, but there must be reward and fun to ensure the renewal and continuation of energy and commitment to any campus-wide retention effort. One of the most effective ways to ensure full involvement is to help individuals and groups identify ways in which they will celebrate each step of progress in the path toward a change goal. This means that there must be a detailed definition of steps of progress and clear definition of the criteria for evidence of progress. The coordinator and administrative leaders can provide very significant support by recognizing and rewarding significant progress, but the work group itself needs to be helped to initiate meaningful joint celebration in recognition of its own progress.

OBSTACLE 9: MOBILIZING TEMPORARY ENERGY AND AVOIDING BACKSLIDING

Many administrators and facilitators create an underground of resistance to change by attempting to mandate extra time and energy for change tasks. If there has been adequate, appropriate involvement and a well-presented offering of opportunities, it will be possible to attract and maintain the volunteer energy of those who are "already busy." Usually it's important to identify and describe clear-cut change projects which will have a finite life, to reward achievements, to arouse expectations of recognition for successful efforts, and to provide a congenial team to work with, consultative help on "how to," and continuing support for dealing with risks, discouragement and unanticipated difficulties. Since temporary task forces are being established which call for significant time and energy, it is important to secure support and sanction from the supervisors of those volunteers who are needed. Training in how to function effectively in task force groups is one of the many personal and professional growth rewards of participating in well-designed retention efforts.

The involvement process normally gets off to an energetic start, and the careful design builds in initial successes to maintain start-up momentum. However, the change agent must be circumspect to avoid the "backsliding" obstacle.

Backsliding occurs from the relaxation that naturally develops after a rousing start and after achieving successful first steps. This same phenomenon exists for change itself. When a new normalcy or homeostasis is not established, a snap-back results. In this way interest can wane and a return to old ways can occur. The primary key is awareness, so that this trap can be circumvented.

OBSTACLE 10: MAINTAINING MOMEMTUM

The most critical responsibility of the leadership team in ensuring the continuity of the mobilization effort is to work effectively to incorporate and merge the temporary energies of campus task forces into the ongoing structures and functions of the established system. If the change efforts are to be successfully incorporated as a part of the continuing operation and structure of the system, the sanction and support of "the establishment" is critically important. The project leadership really has two missions at this point. One is to achieve the support of the ongoing system for the **ad hoc** change efforts which have been possible only because of temporary system energy. The second responsibility is to ensure that the system, i.e., the campus community, will have the awareness, the skills and the values to maintain a continuous process of changeability as new

conditions arise and new data indicate the necessities and opportunities for new phases of a renewal process. It is important to remember that the eleventh vital sign of the healthy campus community described in Chapter II is the achievement of the norms, skills and structures to maintain continuous renewal, flexibility and competence.

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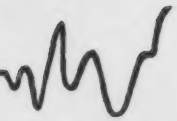

". . . activities that serve to generate significant improvements in the organization as a whole ultimately serve to improve student retention."

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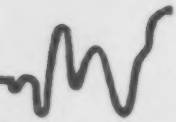

VITAL SIGNS AND INDICATORS OF RETENTION

This chapter describes the general indicators of improved retention which are likely to emerge at institutions that are attempting to improve their quality of life. Institutional renewal and improved student retention really begin when an institution enters into an "internal dialogue" about its mission and about the students that it is best equipped to serve. When this campus-wide internal dialogue is conducted thoroughly and efficiently, it will reveal that retention is in fact a systemic problem which requires curing, through change, a variety of institutional symptoms. The ultimate success of any retention effort depends on the willingness of the institution to go beyond the treatment of symptoms to improve the quality of campus life in all areas. The holistic benefits of the renewal process cannot be achieved by applying "quick remedies" to isolated areas of campus life.

Institutions should be aware that even the best retention programs cannot function effectively by themselves. No matter how ingenious they may be, programs for reducing attrition are unlikely to work well unless they are supported by a broad-based administrative and management process which has the improvement of retention rates and the improvement of the quality of campus life as its goals. In fact, retention rates are increased most effectively when campuses organize and adapt action programs that help them do a better job of all the things they normally do.

Organizing to promote campus health or "system wellness" has several purposes, and increased retention is just one of those outcomes. Retention should not be viewed as the only result or outcome of a total campus renewal project. Improved fundraising, enhanced faculty morale, stronger external communications, increased community appreciation and cost-effective use of campus resources will surely result as well. It is important to remember, though, that these results cannot be achieved by reactive measures. Because increased retention is part of a coordinated process of

change and renewal, it will come about as a result of the proactive strategies and measures developed through campus-wide self-study, dialogue and organization.

RESEARCHING THE INDICATORS OF INCREASED RETENTION

Much is known about the human and institutional factors that affect retention. The list of references on pages 93-95 includes a selection of useful studies from the library of research that is currently available concerning the factors and indicators of persistence. While analyzing its own institution, a campus retention resource committee will want to review the literature to become familiar with the general areas where action programs have proven to be effective on other campuses. The literature suggests that, in general, if an institution wants to create a caring, responsive environment for its students, it must review and revise all aspects of campus life that affect the quality of the student experience on the campus. Although on many campuses the most important features of a holding environment relate to the instructional faculty, a holding environment must involve experiences outside the classroom as well.

During their college years, students prepare themselves for life as well as for work. While they are undergraduates, young adults normally confront and resolve complex personal problems and situations, such as the achievement of independence and self-understanding, the search for a suitable career and the need to clarify a variety of values. Effective retention programs take advantage of theories of student development and maturation. A caring, responsive campus recognizes that retention programs designed according to the phases and outcomes of student development result in growth and enrichment for the institution as well as for the student.

DEFINING RESPONSIVE TARGET GROUPS

It has long been known that the students most likely to drop out of postsecondary institutions are those who are new to postsecondary education, academically underprepared, undecided about college major or career plans, returning adults, economically disadvantaged, or first-generation college students. The final report of a 1980 study of 947 postsecondary institutions, "What Works in Student Retention" (WWISR), which was conducted jointly by The American College Testing Program and the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems, emphasizes that the WWISR findings "seem to support the application of specific action programs or groups of programs to specific target groups." Accordingly,

campuses that are improving their general quality of life will devote attention to some or all of the following **target groups:**

High-risk students who are **academically underprepared** or have **low academic performance** are most likely to be reached by improved academic support and learning skills programs, early warning systems, improved advising, and counseling, in that order.

New students, on the other hand, will benefit most from orientation programs, learning skills programs, academic support systems and improved advising.

Students who are **undecided about their majors or careers** respond best to improved advising, career assistance, and orientation programs, in that order.

Returning adults realize the greatest gains from special orientation programs, peer counseling, career assistance and faculty-staff development programs.

Identification of student groups that are likely to persist in greater numbers if the quality of campus life is improved is crucial to the process of enriching the institutional resources available to students. During the phase of the institutional model devoted to the assessment of campus characteristics and needs, institutions concerned about retention will analyze their recent dropouts and inventory their student populations to identify the characteristics of high-risk or dropout-prone groups. Once these groups and their needs have been studied and described, the campus coordinating committee will begin to determine the "mix" of programs that will benefit their dropout-prone students most fully.

Indicators of Target Areas for Change

In general, institutions that are working to improve the quality of the experiences their students receive show evidence of change in three main areas: academic stimulation, personal future building and involvement experiences. Each campus will, of course, devise specific programs for change that are unique to itself, and that are tailored to fit its own circumstances. What works on one campus may not be appropriate for another. Consequently, the indicators described below—which include a wide range of campus activities from academic advising to wilderness experiences, from faculty contact to motivational enhancement—may need alteration before they will fit the needs and requirements of specific campuses.

Academic stimulation and assistance, a major component of a holding environment, is the primary business of the institution as a whole—and it must receive the main emphasis. Institutions engaged in changing their campus environments have developed a great variety of programs to meet academic needs better through their curriculum and instructors, their academic advising center and their learning support systems. An overview of research and experience shows that it has become increasingly apparent that the most important features of the holding environment have to do with the faculty and the instructional staff.

Students frequently judge the worth of their academic experiences on the basis of their perceptions of the quality of instruction, the accessibility of faculty members for consultation and advice, their freedom to consult faculty, and faculty and staff involvement outside the classroom. Do the faculty contribute positively to a holding environment? This question can be answered as part of an institution's data collection process. Academic programs that are undergoing review and renewal in order to contribute to a holding environment are prime indicators of vital improvements in retention.

According to the WWISR study, the most successful and most frequently reported indicators of change to improve the quality of life in the area of academic programming were learning and academic support systems, improvement in academic advising, early warning systems and faculty and staff development. Examples of a number of these indicators are listed below.

Learning Support Centers and Activities

A learning center offering a learning lab, peer tutoring, mini-courses and orientation.

A credit-bearing learning lab for developmental English and reading courses

A study skills program, with workshops and opportunities for individualized help

A noncredit writing lab

Individual academic tutoring in 22 department subject areas

A two-day summer workshop, followed by weekly group meetings with peer advisors during the first nine weeks of the fall semester to cover basic skills

An individual needs program with comprehensive support services

A two-semester-hour elective course taught by peer counselors who receive course skills training

Enriched Academic Advising

A restructured academic advising program, involving intensive work with faculty

A central advising center staffed by 25 volunteer faculty members

Faculty advising with a peer advisor to assist the faculty member

Faculty advisors specially trained to counsel freshmen

Assignment of senior faculty members to honor students for hands-on research experiences

An academic exploration program and a decentralized advising system

Twelve undergraduate advisement centers (one for each college)

A student academic advisement manual combined with a handbook for advisors

A new advising/counseling "early-warning" procedure to follow up all students with low midterm grades

A student advisement center for undecided freshmen and all students with academic questions

Faculty awareness and development activities

A seminar on college teaching available for graduate credit for faculty

"Let's Talk Teaching," a monthly faculty forum discussing teaching excellence and improvement of instruction

An ongoing faculty instructional development program consisting of seminars, workshops, a faculty development library and a newsletter

Two-day summer workshops for faculty on effective teaching and evaluation of teaching

A faculty development program supported by outside funds

All-college seminars on retention-attrition-recruitment

A one-week faculty workshop on retention and advisement

Faculty advising workshops relating advising to retention

A campus-wide review and evaluation of advising

Ongoing workshops to identify students likely to drop out

Personal Future Building stresses exploration and resolution of the overall scholastic, career and life goals of students. Here academic progress, career plans and maturation come together with the natural process of student development to show that an institution has provided fertile ground for implementing the kind of resourceful, caring and responsive programs that will spur institutional growth by enhancing students' personal growth. The WWISR findings suggest that the most successful and most frequently reported change indicators in the area of personal development and planning were improved orientation programs, improved advising, career assistance and counseling. Examples are the following:

Career Assistance Programs

A freshman workshop on career planning, study skills, leadership and assertiveness

Summer workshops on college and career planning

Development of a "Career Pathfinder Guide" to assist students in career planning

A noncredit 14-hour course on "Where Do I Go from Here with My Life?"

Improved Orientation Activities

Summer orientation, testing and placement, followed by consultation with freshmen and their parents

A freshman overnight experience in a wilderness environment

A new student colloquium: one-hour sessions, once a week

A special orientation designed for transfer students

A class that explores the purpose of the liberal arts and the research resources of the college

Special workshops for nontraditional students, including motivation, values clarification, self-esteem, shyness

A semester-long mentor program with a student-faculty team in weekly one-and-one-half-hour sessions

A series of life-skills workshops to assist students who live off-campus

Involvement experiences in activities outside the classroom often affect the quality of life on campus almost as deeply as academic experiences do. Although research and experience have only begun to reveal the areas in which programs designed to improve student involvement experiences will be productive areas for retention-related programs, many institutions have implemented program improvements that are designed to enhance the out-of-classroom experiences of their students.

New Research Findings

Among other findings, the WWISR study showed that while institutional change resulting in improved retention can be effected through both spontaneous and intentionally planned efforts, many institutions with effective retention programs intentionally organized them. A recent national study by Noel and Levitz follows up on this concept, focusing on the nature of the organizational structure for improved student retention and on the indicators of success of the planned change effort.

Although the study is still under way, preliminary results based on responses from 77 colleges and universities are available. Thus far, the study shows that the degree to which institutions formally plan and organize their campus improvement effort has an effect on the number of indicators of organizational change and improvement that are reported. Campuses that had formally structured the improvement plan were more likely to report greater numbers of change indicators than were campuses with less formally structured improvement efforts.

Campus Change Indicators

A variety of indicators of institutional change were noted by survey respondents. These indicators cut across all facets of campus life. The indicators are presented below in order of frequency of response.

Revised advising system or procedures

Introduced early alert prediction system to identify potential dropouts

Assessed student opinions/attitudes

Introduced retention data collection system or conducted retention study

Initiated special freshman advising program

Shortened registration procedures

Conducted an institutional self-study

Assessed the opinions/attitudes of faculty/staff/administration

Revised withdrawal/reentry procedures

Revised curriculum

Reviewed mission statement

Conducted special training sessions for employees on techniques for effective interaction with students

Introduced or revised student evaluations of teaching

Introduced incentives to encourage out-of-class contacts between faculty and students

Revised probation policy

Introduced instructional development strategies, incentives, programs

Revised student aid policy

Revised criteria for faculty hiring, promotion and tenure

Concluding Statement

Students interact with virtually all segments of the organization's environment during their tenure on a campus. A student's decision to persist until the completion of educational goals may be influenced, in part, by the nature of those interactions. Thus, activities that serve to generate significant improvements in the organization as a whole ultimately serve to improve student retention. In short, improved retention starts with the development of a holding environment which can be created through the careful design and the thoughtful delivery of quality academic and related student services and experiences. And it really begins when the institution enters into an internal dialogue about its mission and the quality of life it hopes to build on its campus.

ADDITIONAL RETENTION RESOURCES

Selected College Student Retention Literature

Astin, A.W. **Preventing Students from Dropping Out.** San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1975.

Develops measures of student "dropout proneness." Uses these measures to assess the effects of various factors on the decision to drop out.

Beal, P.E., and Noel, L. **What Works in Student Retention; the report of a joint project of The American College Testing Program and the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems.** Iowa City, Ia.: American College Testing Program, 1980.

Reports findings of a national survey of programs and efforts to improve student retention. Identifies successful action programs and recommends institutional strategies.

Bean, J.P. Dropouts and turnover: the synthesis and test of a causal model of student attrition. **Research in Higher Education,** 1980, 12, 155-187.

Develops a model drawn from findings on turnover in work organizations and on student attrition. Makes practical recommendations for reducing attrition.

Cope, R., and Hannah, W. **Revolving College Doors: The Causes and Consequences of Dropping Out, Stopping Out, and Transferring.** New York: Wiley, 1975.

Examines variables associated with dropping out, applies the findings and presents student and institutional case studies. Gives recommendations and guidelines for needed changes.

Kesselman, J. **Stopping Out: A Guide to Leaving College and Getting Back In.** New York: M. Evans, 1976.

Examines options available at many schools for stopping out. Offers advice to students considering leaving college.

Lenning, O.T., Sauer, K., and Beal, P.E. **Student Retention Strategies.** Washington, D.C.: American Association for Higher Education, 1980.

Reviews the literature on student retention. Integrates the findings, presents successful strategies and draws conclusions about improving retention.

Noel, L. (Ed.) **Reducing the Dropout Rate.** San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1978.

Action-oriented sourcebook suggests solutions to retention problems through mobilization of collective resources already in existence on campus.

Pantages, T.J., and Creedon, C.F. Studies of college attrition: 1950-1975. **Review of Educational Research,** 1978, **48,** 49-101.

Summarizes 25 years of research findings. Highlights information useful to colleges concerned about attrition. Suggests campus retention efforts.

Patrick, C., Myers, E., and Van Dusen, W. **A Manual for Conducting Student Attrition Studies.** Rev. ed. Boulder, Colo.: National Center for Higher Education Management Systems, 1979.

Gives detailed administrative procedures, processing guidelines and examples of questionnaires and other materials necessary for conducting attrition surveys.

Ramist, L. **College Student Attrition and Retention.** New York: College Entrance Examination Board, 1981.

Reviews attrition and retention research. Studies the characteristics of dropouts and how college environment affects persistence. Describes programs to improve education service and thereby enhance retention.

Smith, D.H. **Admission and Retention Problems of Black Students at Seven Predominantly White Universities.** Washington, D.C.: National Advisory Committee on Black Higher Education and Black Colleges and Universities, 1980.

Analyzes interviews and questionnaire responses in order to examine the Black students' milieu, identify problems and recommend ways of overcoming obstacles to Black students' success at these universities.

Spady, W.G. Dropouts from higher education: toward an empirical model. **Interchange,** 1971, **2** (3), 38-62.

Provides a model which can deal with academic and social systems of the college and link precollegiate experiences with later academic and social outcomes. Uses longitudinal data to test the model's utility. Discusses institutional policies.

Tinto, V. Dropout from higher education: a theoretical synthesis of recent research. **Review of Educational Research,** 1975, **45,** 89-125.

Uses research findings to fill in elements of a model of the processes of dropping out. Examines characteristics of the students and the institution, and describes their interaction. Develops suggestions for future research.

U.S. National Center for Education Statistics. **Withdrawal from Institutions of Higher Education: An Appraisal with Longitudinal Data Involving Diverse Institutions.** National Longitudinal Study, William B. Fetters, Project Officer. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1977.

Presents data related to withdrawal and to later academic, occupational and personal development of dropouts. Discusses implications of the findings.

Retention Data Collection Services

Three major services are widely available:
1) evaluation/survey services;
2) student attrition programs;
3) student outcome information services.

For specific information and inquiry refer to:

The American College Testing Program
2201 North Dodge St.
P.O. Box 168
Iowa City, Iowa 52243

The College Entrance Examination Board
888 7th Ave.
New York, NY 10019

The Council for the Advancement of Small Colleges
One Dupont Circle, Suite 320
Washington, D.C. 20013

Educational Testing Service
Box 966
Princeton, NJ 08540

The National Center for Higher Education Management Systems
P.O. Drawer P
Boulder, Colorado 80302

National Information System Access

Educational Resources Information Center—ERIC is a national information system for providing ready access to descriptions of exemplary programs, research and development efforts and related information that can be used in developing more effective educational programs.

ERIC Clearinghouses have responsibility within the network for acquiring the significant educational literature within specified subject areas.

National Office

Educational Resources Information Center
Central ERIC
Washington, D.C. 20208

Clearinghouses

ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management
University of Oregon
Eugene, Oregon 97403

ERIC Clearinghouse on Higher Education
George Washington University
One Dupont Circle, Suite 630
Washington, D.C. 20036

ERIC Clearinghouse for Junior Colleges
96 Powell Library Building
University of California
Los Angeles, California 90024

Index

Academic Advising 89
Accountability
 Contracts 23
 Trend 9
Action 43, 60
Adversarial 6
All Campus Assembly 59
Anxiety 6
Assessment 58, 61
Brainstorming 46, 54
Campus
 Collaboration 16, 21, 34, 57
 Communication 13, 34, 73
 Futuring Workshop 46
 Health Check 30
 Holding 93
 Participation 9, 37, 38, 74, 75, 76
 Renewal 13, 28, 61, 72, 85
 Resource Tapping 37
 Uniqueness 73, 74
Career Assistance 90
Case Study 43
Celebration 22, 61
Change
 Ambivalence About 77
 Backsliding 80
 Conservatism 71, 72
 Continuity 61, 72
 Forces Of 71
 Forces Toward Readiness 7
 Integration 28, 61, 72
 Mobilizing Principles 33-38
 Need For 3
 Readiness 3, 7, 8, 9, 69
 Renewal 28, 61, 72, 85
 Resistance to 77
 Ordering 70
 Sanction 69
 Temporary System 72
 Ten Ways to Work With Resistance 78

Changeability 28
Chief Executive Officer 36, 37, 54, 60, 70
Collaboration 13, 16, 21, 25, 34, 72
Communication
 Campus-wide 34
 Networking 59, 73
 Vertical 13
Community
 Decentralization 73
 Renewal 13, 28, 61, 72, 85
 Vital Signs 30
Conflict 26, 15, 77, 78
Consensus 15
Conservatism Forces 71, 72
Context 3-17
Coordination 23, 73
Creative Compromise 26, 78
Data
 Gathering 33
 System 28
 Use 59, 61
Decentralization 24, 73
Diagnosis 59
Downsizing 14
ERIC 101
Estates 3, 4, 57
Evaluation 22, 23, 24, 58, 59
Faculty 4, 27, 85, 88, 89
Family Teams 35
Future 13, 21, 22, 29, 41-49, 56
Health Checklist 30
Hierarchy
 Communication Distortion 13
 Patterns Of 6, 24, 73
Higher Education
 Seven Conditions Of 68
 Growth Of 3
Implementation
 Issues 67-74
 Obstacles 74-81
Indicators
 Of Retention 85
 Of Target Areas 87

Innovation 15, 16, 24, 25
Interdependence 8
Leadership 2, 22, 73
Learnership 27
Managing Disagreement 26
Marginals 76
Micro Session 43-46, 54, 55, 69
Mobilizing Change
 Issues 67-74
 Obstacles 74-81
 Principles 33-38
Model
 Action 53, 60
 All Campus Assembly 59
 Campus Quality of Life Council 58
 Chart 62, 63
 Communication Project Team 55
 Data Project Team 55
 Estates 57
 Implementation 60
 Internalization 56
 Major Organization Areas 57
 Phases 53, 56, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62
 Project Coordinator 54, 58, 60
 Retention Resource Team 55, 58, 59, 60
 Start-up 53
Movers And Shakers 75
National Information Systems 101
Organization
 Development 33, 53
 Dynamics 68
 Dysfunction 73
 Health 30
 Renewal 28, 61, 72, 85
 Subparts 5, 5, 15, 23, 24, 25, 57, 68, 74
Pain 4, 42
Participation
 Involvement 8, 9, 13, 16, 21-25, 34, 37, 38, 56-60, 74, 75, 76
 Nomination 75
 Passivity 6
 Preparation 75, 79
 Skills 76
 Support 70, 71

Phases
Action Planning 59
Assessment 58
Chart 62, 63
Implementation 60
Internalization 56
Renewal 61
Start Up 53
Planning
Customizing for Uniqueness 73, 74
Futuring 22, 29, 41-49, 56
Problems 11, 67-81
Pluralistic Dissensus 15
Power
Orientation of Leadership 70
Sharing 13
Powerlessness 6
Pride 8
Productivity 7, 17, 21, 24
Professional Growth 26
Project Coordinator 54, 58, 60
Quality 3, 11, 16, 17
Reactive 13, 41, 67
Readiness
of Complex Universities 69
Incremental 3
Themes of 8, 9
Renewal 13, 28, 61, 72, 85
Resources
Better Use of 11
Campus Resource Tapping 37
Consultant Facilitators 14
Downsizing 14
Retention
Data Services 99
Indicators of 85
of Target Areas 87
Research 91, 95
Reward 70, 71, 79
Sanction 69
Scanning 24, 74
Security 6
Segment Approach 67

Skill
Banks 25
Learnership 27
Preparation and Support 75, 76, 79
Project Coordinator 54, 58, 60
Support 70, 71
Survival 3, 9
Stewardship 68
Students
Involvement 38
Neglect 17
Voices 7
System
Approach 21, 33, 67
Disequilibrium 72
Failure 15, 73
Flattened Pattern 24, 73
Hierarchy 6, 13, 24, 73
Integration 6, 13, 24, 72, 73
Systemic Approach 21, 33, 67
Teamwork 25, 59, 73
Trends
Action Mentality 16
Collaboration 16
Consultant Resources 14
Downsizing 14
Future-Orientation 13
Neglect of Human Environment 17
Innovations 15
Obsolete Colleges 12
Pluralistic Dissensus 15
Power Sharing 13
Proactive Inclination 13
Quality 3, 17
Readiness for Mobilization 14
Voices
Critical Messages from Off Campus 11
On Campus 4-8
Outside Campus 10, 11
Pains 4
Readiness 7-11
Themes from Pains 5,6
Themes from Readiness 8,9

Wellness 21, 85
Win-Win 26, 78
Withdrawal 6

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